

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1882.

Love the Debt.

CHAPTER XLV.

PUSHED FROM HIS STOOL.



AWLEY stayed over Sunday at Hollyhurst. The large fortune left him by his uncle enabled him to keep, among other luxuries, a curate, whom he overwhelmed by a telegram asking him to take all the duty of the day following. One sermon was nearly as grievous a burden to the newly-ordained curate as to his hearers, and two were crushing, especially when ordered late on Saturday afternoon; but, though Lawley knew this, and felt for

his wretched victim, he could not tear himself away from Mabel. She had no need to be concerned for his happiness if these first hours of their engagement were any augury of the future. "Usually in love," says the cynical Frenchman, "one loves and the other submits to be loved;" and again, "In love, to love a little is the surest way to be

loved much." Whatever truth there is in these maxims—and no doubt there is some truth in them—helps to explain the intensity of Lawley's love and happiness. It was enough for him that Mabel accepted his love and his life. Mabel took these great gifts with awe and exceeding diffidence, and found them even greater than she had imagined. Lawley disclosed to her a depth of tenderness of which she had no conception. Even when Lady Saddlethwaite was present all his cynicism was sheathed. Out of the depths sprang up a fountain of kindly humour as a fountain of sweet water sometimes springs out from the depths of the ocean, in strange contrast to the acrid cynicism he was given to. But when Mabel and he were *tête-à-tête*, and he opened his whole heart to her, she found in it, as we say, a depth of womanly tenderness which amazed and touched and drew her to him irresistibly. He told her frankly of the source of his cynicism and misogyny—the treachery of his first love, a young lady who jilted him for his elder brother—now dead—and to whom he allowed no small proportion of his income. About her, we need hardly say, Mabel was extremely curious. Lawley, however, was much more anxious to speak of his present love, and could hardly be got off this fascinating subject. He had the tact, too, scarcely to be looked for from a lunatic or a lover, to dwell upon the amount of good Mabel could do as a clergyman's wife among the poor and in the schools, and to himself. For, he gave her to understand with perfect truth, that since he was lost in love he had no heart for sacred or secular work, or anything but her. Mabel archly suggested that this great work of reclamation put at such length before her might have been tersely expressed in one word—"the MacGucken;" that she was chosen as the less of two evils, on the same principle as that by which a special fiery sherry was tried by the late Lord Derby to expel the gout, and with probably as unsatisfactory a result, for his lordship, upon trial of both, preferred the gout. But, indeed, Mr. Lawley had hit upon a happy plan for ridding himself of the MacGucken, or rather, for ridding the MacGucken of himself. He would build a vicarage, leaving the old house as a hospital in her charge. He intended to make the church some present, and might as well put it in a form which would benefit at the same time his parish and himself. But while the vicarage was being built he meant to go abroad—with Mabel. In other words, he meant that they should be married at once and spend a long honeymoon in those places—treasured carefully in his memory—which he had heard Mabel at different times express a wish to see. Mabel, thus startled into realising her betrothal, recoiled from an immediate marriage, and was with difficulty wearied into consenting to its taking place three months hence. With this hardly-wrung concession Lawley was fain to be content, and for the rest was absolutely and supremely happy, too happy, fey. As he drove into the school with Mabel on Monday morning he dwelt on the happiness she had given him in terms which almost terrified her. Even if she loved him with her whole heart she could not,

have made him half as happy as he hoped, but as it was—her heart sank within her. But he—he had no misgivings. He was in wild spirits, intoxicated with that true *vinum Dæmonum*, day dreams, and little thought that the passionate kiss he pressed upon her lips as they neared the school was his last. Two hours after they parted at the school door he was again at Hollyhurst, wild and bewildered with an unopened letter in his hand.

"Mr. Lawley! what has happened?"

He handed Lady Saddlethwaite the unopened letter, whose address, however, told her no story.

"From him," he said, sinking into a chair, and looking wildly up at her. Lady Saddlethwaite began to think his brain was affected.

"From him? From whom?"

"Kneeshaw!"

"The murdered man?"

Lawley nodded.

"Nonsense! Impossible! You haven't opened it." She still thought his head turned.

"I can't," he said hoarsely, starting up and striding to the mantelpiece, and leaning his face upon his folded arms.

"You open it."

Lady Saddlethwaite tore open the envelope and looked at the signature of the letter. "George B. Kneeshaw." She looked back to the address and date, in the hope which Lawley had been too stunned to think of, that the letter was an old one. No, it was dated seven weeks since. She sat down, stunned also. Presently he faced round, white, haggard, looking ten years older than he looked two hours since.

"What does he say?"

"I haven't read it, but it's from him."

"Yes, it's from him. He was my dearest friend, yet I wished him dead. God! how I love that girl!"

He turned from her again and buried his face in his hands. Lady Saddlethwaite looked on in helpless pity. At last she said,

"He cares nothing for her. Why didn't he write to her all this time? He has forgotten her. I should let her forget him."

"Does he say nothing of her?" he cried with sudden hope, turning once more, and taking the letter from her hand. Its very first words had an application little intended by the writer.

"My dear Lawley,

The times have been,
That when the brains were out the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools.

("Ay 'push us from our stools,'" repeated Lawley bitterly.)

"You at least will rejoice to hear that I am alive; and yet I left you all this time in the belief that I was murdered; and I should not

have written even now even to you if it was not for the horrible news of her engagement, which I came upon by an accident in a scrap of an old newspaper. I've gone through terrible sufferings since we parted, but I never knew what agony was till then. I thought I could write calmly; I cannot——"

Here the letter broke off and resumed under a new date a day latter.

"I allowed her to think me dead that she might be free to do as she has done; but I did not realise what it would be to me, or I could not have done it. Poor as I was, broken in fortune and health, a beggar and on the brink of starvation, I should have kept her to her miserable engagement sooner than suffer this if I had known what torture it would be to me. I did try to keep her to it when too late, when it would only have made her wretched without lightening my wretchedness. When I read the news I started for Castlemaine as I was, in workman's clothes, meaning to telegraph both to her and you. But when I reached the town I had no money, and could get none, and had to go home, two days' journey, and so had time to come to myself, and to come to thank God that I was saved from doing a cruel and dastardly thing. But I was mad in those first moments, and am mad, or at least, not sane, at times now. That she should engage herself, within two months was it? of the news of my murder! It is maddening. Who was this Lord Charlecote? She was the last girl in the world I should have thought——. Lawley, you can never know how I loved that girl. I could have died for her. It would have been easier and better for me to have died for her than to have allowed her to think me dead that she might be free to forget me—in two months! Yet since the day we parted there has not been one waking hour in which she was out of my thoughts. It was my own fault, you will say. I should have written and prevented or contradicted the report of my murder. You will not say so when you hear my story."

The letter then proceeded to give in outline the story we have already told of George's fortunes, carrying it on to the day when he came upon the news of Mabel's engagement to Lord Charlecote. Just before he chanced upon it, a wool speculation had turned out so extraordinarily well that he had made his mind up to write home and break the news of his being alive and prosperous, through Lawley, to Mabel, if she still were free.

George's letter closed with a short, simple, and touching allusion to their friendship, the only thing now left to him in the world.

The letter touched Lawley with remorse, and brought him back to his stronger and better self. Nothing showed the intensity and almost insanity of his passion more than the breakdown of his strength of mind. That he, of all men, should not have had the courage to open the letter, or the fortitude to bear the bitterness of the blow alone. He must forsooth rush off to Lady Saddlethwaite, like a hurt child, and

hand her the unopened letter. And what was this horrible news which he could not read himself, or bear alone? That his dearest friend, whose murder had been horrible news to him, was alive! But the letter recalled him to himself. He was shocked with himself, ashamed, and humiliated. "You must break it to her," he said, handing Lady Saddlethwaite the letter, which, to tell the truth, she would have liked to put in the fire.

"And you?" she asked, with the deepest sympathy in her voice.

"Oh, I'm *de trop*. It's my turn to go to Australia now," he answered bitterly, rising to take leave.

"Don't go," she said entreatingly, "wait till I come back. There will be some message."

Lawley shook his head. "She will not have a thought to spare to me. I must go, Lady Saddlethwaite; I am better alone."

After Lawley had gone, Lady Saddlethwaite sat with the letter in her lap, enraged at heart. Who was this man that came in to upset her plans at the moment of their success, to disturb and destroy the happiness of the two people in which she was most interested—this dog in the manger, who showed a fine indifference to Mabel when no one else wanted her, but began to whine when she was won by another; and who showed this fine indifference not to his own feelings only, but to hers, since a telegram would have saved her all the cruel and crushing anguish she had gone through for him? Lady Saddlethwaite hadn't taken in what, however, was plainly put in the letter, that the news of his murder did not reach George until months after it had reached Mabel. Indeed, she was too thorough a woman to be just, and was really enraged with George because he wasn't Lawley. However, there was no help for it, she must herself be the instrument to unravel all the work she had painfully knit up in the last year. She must at once see Mabel, and break this thing to her, and let her be happy in her own perverse way. There was at least the consolation that the girl would be happy. Still Lady Saddlethwaite set forth on her joyous mission in not much better heart than she had gone on her mission of consolation more than a year since.

As it was past twelve before Lady Saddlethwaite reached Wefton Mabel was at home, and on seeing the carriage stop she hastened in some disquietude to meet her kind friend at the door. What could have happened to bring her in little more than three hours after they had parted? Mabel was—what with her was most unusual—nervous and unstrung, in the mood for imagining evils of all kinds. Lawley's wild raptures had frightened her. Such a love must be exacting, and what had she to pay? It was wrong to marry him—wrong to him, wrong to herself, wrong to God. And to the memory of George what was it? She read his letters over, and looked over all the relics of him she had treasured until her sorrow came upon her almost as fresh as the first day, and flooded her heart till it overflowed in unusual tears.

Traces of her trouble on her face made Lady Saddlethwaite ask the question which, at the same moment, was on the lips of Mabel.

"Has anything happened, dear?"

"No, nothing. Had you heard that something had happened to me, Lady Saddlethwaite?" asked Mabel, surprised and perplexed.

"No, dear, but you have trouble in your face. The old trouble?"

Mabel was silent. She felt that Lady Saddlethwaite would almost resent her relapse into mourning for George at the very moment of her engagement to Lawley. She was relieved when Lady Saddlethwaite said pleasantly,

"You're incorrigible, my dear; but I suppose I must let you be happy in your own way," which Mabel of course construed to mean, "if fretting is a relief to you, I mustn't scold you for it."

"You're already regretting your engagement, child?" interrogatively.

"Dear Lady Saddlethwaite, I'm regretting only my ingratitude and heartlessness. He gives me so much for—for nothing."

"You don't know how generous he is, Mabel," cried Lady Saddlethwaite impetuously. And then, after a pause, "He's been with me since we parted this morning, and asked me to come to see you." Another pause, during which Mabel was plunged in perplexity.

"He's had news from Australia, dear. Good news," she hastened to add, for the girl looked aghast at the mere name.

"Good news!"

Mabel sat, white as marble, with wide eyes and parted lips, as though she saw a spirit—George's spirit. Lady Saddlethwaite rose alarmed to ring for some wine, but Mabel clutched her dress with a convulsive grasp.

"He's not dead!" she gasped.

Lady Saddlethwaite was distressed and disgusted with her own clumsiness.

"There's a report, dear," she began hesitatingly.

"Only a report! You wouldn't bring me only a report. He's not dead!" she cried breathlessly, with a desperate intensity in her look which frightened Lady Saddlethwaite.

"No, he's not dead!" she said bluntly, thinking the shock of the truth better than the strain of the suspense. Mabel's hand relaxed its hold of Lady Saddlethwaite's dress as she fell back—not fainting—conscious, but helpless as in a dream. Lady Saddlethwaite rung the bell, and Mabel followed her movements with her eyes with the listless curiosity of a convalescent who cannot collect or concentrate his thoughts. The shock had, so to speak, knocked reason off the box, and the scattered team of her faculties wandered at will without direction or control. Jane brought in wine, which Lady Saddlethwaite administered like a medicine to her patient, and so woke her up as from sleep.

"It is true?" she asked, seizing Lady Saddlethwaite's hand, and looking up appealingly as for life into her face.

"Now, Mabel, I shall tell you nothing till you are calmer," Lady Saddlethwaite answered with calculated severity. "Let me help you to the sofa, and lie down a bit till you are more composed."

"I think I can manage that without help, dear Lady Saddlethwaite," she said, rising with an assumption of composed strength, but she had to sit down again, her head swimming, and her limbs trembling and failing her. Lady Saddlethwaite made her finish the glass of sherry and then helped her to the sofa. Mabel, laid on the sofa, did not trust herself again to speak, lest the unsteadiness of her voice would belie any assurance of calmness, but she expressed her yearning more eloquently through the pressure of Lady Saddlethwaite's hand, through her parted lips and her eyes feverishly bright fastened on her friend's face with a devouring eagerness.

"Yes, he's alive dear," said Lady Saddlethwaite in a voice that would have suited better with an announcement of death, for she could not forgive George his unconscionable resurrection. "Mr. Lawley brought the news this morning, and asked me to break it to you. There was no one to break it to him," she continued, thinking it both wise and just to divert to her displaced lover Mabel's strained attention. "I never felt so much for anyone—not even for you, dear—as I felt for him this morning. I hardly knew him, he looked so wild and haggard. He scarcely knew what he did or what he said, and could not bring himself to open the letter."

"A letter from George!" exclaimed Mabel. Alas, for Lawley! All his love and grief could not secure him now a higher interest than that of a postman. Love is as jealous and cruel as an eastern despot who slays all his kindred that he may reign in secure loneliness. Lady Saddlethwaite resented, as well she might, this insensibility to the sufferings of her ill-used *protégé*.

"Yes; a letter from Mr Kneeshaw. He wrote in good time," she said bitterly.

Mabel heard without heeding the sarcasm.

"But why didn't he write to—— why didn't he write before?"

"Why, indeed!" cried Lady Saddlethwaite, more and more embittered.

"Doesn't the letter explain?" a kind of terror in her tremulous voice. A horrible heart-sickness seized her. Was he faithless? Lady Saddlethwaite's sympathies deserted at once to her side.

"It's your letter, dear. It's all about you. You'd better read it. It can't upset you more than my bungling." She drew the letter from her pocket and handed it to Mabel. Mabel held it in her shaking hands and tried to read it, but a mist dimmed her eyes and the letters ran together. She could not read a word.

"I cannot read it," she said helplessly. "Will you read it for me, Lady Saddlethwaite?"

"There's nothing but good news in it, child. He loves you still to distraction; but he's been ill and unfortunate, and did not think it fair to keep you to a hopeless engagement."

"Oh, it was cruel," cried Mabel, trying again to read it in vain.

"Please read it for me, Lady Saddlethwaite."

Lady Saddlethwaite read the first few lines.

"What engagement?" cried Mabel, starting up into a sitting posture.

"Oh, it was some story of your engagement to Lord Charlecote that got into Galignani and was copied into an Australian paper." Mabel stood up strong with excitement.

"I must telegraph. Will you kindly drive me down to the office?"

"That's a very good idea, dear," said Lady Saddlethwaite, knowing that nothing would give such relief to Mabel as immediate action. "I shall just finish the letter and take you down with me. There, sit down, child. It won't take many minutes to read it through."

Mabel sat down and heard the long letter to the end. But when Lady Saddlethwaite had finished it, and Mabel attempted to rise, she trembled so that she could hardly stand, and was fain to sit down again.

"You will go; you will send it," she sobbed, a kind of tearless sob.

"I shall send Jane with it at once. There, lie down, dear. I shall stay with you, and Jane will take it at once." She rose and went to the table to write it.

"Tell him to come homè, Lady Saddlethwaite."

"I have told him, child. He'll get it in a few hours and be here in a few weeks."

She rang and gave Jane due instructions, and nearly sent her also into hysterics with the news. But as Lady Saddlethwaite told her she must not lose a moment, the discreet Jane suppressed her feelings for the present. In a short time she came back breathless.

"Please, my lady, the post office man wouldn't send it at first. He said there must be some mistake, for he had sent it off half-an-hour ago."

"Mr. Lawley!" exclaimed Lady Saddlethwaite.

"Yes, my lady; he asked me if I wasn't Mr. Lawley's servant, but when I told him it was from your ladyship he sent it."

Yet Mabel had forgotten him.

"She will not have a thought to spare to me," he had said, and said truly.

CHAPTER XLVI.

"THE BRATTLE."

LAWLEY had an eccentric habit which had done most—next to his carelessness about money—to get him the character of being "a bit touched" among the shrewder folk of Fenton. When he couldn't sleep, either from over-smoking or over-working his brain, he would get up and go

out at all hours of the night or early morning to take an exhausting walk, and so force on sleep by means of bodily fatigue. But now sleep seemed to have gone from him altogether, and beyond recall. For two nights after the receipt of George's letter he had not closed his eyes. On the third he went to bed late—or early, rather—at about two in the morning; and, after tossing miserably for three hours, got up and went out to walk himself weary. On starting he took bye-paths, out of the track of men on the way to the mine, and girls to the factory; but as these streams ceased to flow at six o'clock, he ventured to return home by the highway, and was thereby caught in a torrent he little expected. A crowd of women, not girls, but matrons, breathless, frenzied, flying as for life, overtook him at a crossing, and swept him on with them. They were colliers' wives and mothers, and he knew at once that there had been a pit accident.

"An accident?"

"Aye."

"Where?"

"Garthoyles."

"How many down?"

"Four."

Four, indeed, was the number that this poor woman had in the pit—a husband and three sons, and she had no room in her mind for the sixty-three others who were down also. A railway accident in which twenty are killed creates a greater sensation than a pit accident in which three hundred lives are lost, because every one travels by rail, but only the poorest work in a pit. For this very reason, however, a pit accident is the most deplorable possible, since all the killed are poor, and all bread-winners; and the lighting of a pipe or the opening of a lamp desolates a whole village like an earthquake. In this case, however, it was not the recklessness of any of the sufferers, but the carelessness of the engine tender that caused the accident. The man was bemused from the effects of a drunken debauch, and overwound a heavy curve of coal which, carried over the top gearing, broke loose, thundered back down the shaft, and, crashing against some massive oaken beams more than two-thirds of the way down, shivered them to matchwood, and wrecked the lower part of the double shaft of which they were the support. More than 100 tons of earth, rock, and timber fell in and choked the shaft, cutting off not only the escape of the miners, but their air supply also, since the air trunks were wrecked. There were sixty-seven men and boys down at the time, fifty-four of them in the better-bed seam, which was forty yards below the black-bed, and was connected with it by a small shaft. Their case was desperate. Only three men would have had room to work at removing the rubbish, and these could work only at the risk of their lives, since earth and stones fell at intervals from the shattered sides of the shaft. Long before so few men, working under such difficulties, could have cleared the shaft,

the imprisoned pitmen would have been starved to death; and long before they could have been starved, they would have been suffocated, for the ventilating shaft, which was divided only by a partition from the main shaft, was choked with its ruins.

It was hopeless to attempt anything, and nothing was attempted. A few men stood silent and paralysed, looking down the mouth of the shaft; round them was a crowd of women, the wives and mothers of the doomed miners—some still, as though turned to stone, others shrieking piteously; a few besieging the engine-house and clamouring savagely for the engine tender, while those nearest the inner circle of men clutched and clung to them, asking the same question in the same words a hundred times over. A sudden and a moment's silence stilled them all when Lawley appeared. It was a touching tribute to the character he had earned for helping the helpless. There was hardly a man or woman there whom he had not helped at some time and in some way, and who had not a vague hope of help from him now. In another moment, and as they made way for him to approach the pit's mouth, the silence was broken, the women appealing to him in heart-rending tones for the lives of their sons and husbands, as if he held them in his hand.

"It's awr Tom; he taiched i' t' Sunday schooil."

Another, pushing her roughly aside and clutching his arm with the grip of a vice, cried in a fierce hoarse voice, "Think on, aw've nowt aboon ground nah. Aw've five dahn, do ye hear, five!"

Another, with an insane look in her eyes, pressed upon him a basket with her husband and boy's "drinking" in it, which, upon hearing of the accident, she had set to deliberately and packed. "Tak' it to 'em, wilt ta? Shoo says," nodding towards a neighbour, "they'll niver coom up agin no more."

Lawley made his way through all this misery to the pit's mouth.

"How was it?"

The pit steward told him.

"Have you been down?"

"We've lowered the bucket, sir, and it won't go much more than half-way!"

Lawley stepped into the bucket, taking a safety-lamp from one of the men. "Lower away!" he cried.

The voices of these poor women in his ears drove him upon action of some kind.

"The sides are falling in, sir!"

"Lower away!" he cried again, impatiently.

"For God's sake, Mr. Lawley——"

"I shall not stay down more than a minute, Cook. Lower quickly, and draw up quickly, when I pull the rope."

The men lowered him at first slowly, but very fast as the bucket neared the wreck. It stopped, and while it stayed below the men, as they stooped over, could hear another fall of débris. Then the rope was

chucked, and they hauled up the bucket swiftly, and Lawley soon reappeared with a very ugly gash in his forehead, from which the blood streamed down his pale face, giving him the ghastly look of a messenger of death. A groan burst from the wretched women at his appearance, from which they augured the worst.

"It's a terrible business," he said, as he reached the top.

"You're badly hurt, sir."

"No; it's nothing, thank you. How deep was the shaft?"

"Thirty yards to the black-bed, sir. Let me tie your handkerchief round it."

"Thank you. It would take ten days to clear!"

"Ten days, sir! It wouldn't be cleared in three weeks if men could go to work at it at once. But they'd have to repair the sides first before they dared put a spade into it."

Lawley sat on the bucket turned bottom upward, while Cook bound the handkerchief about his forehead. Suddenly he sprang up, dislodging the bandage and reopening the wound.

"Where does it drain into?"

"By Gow!" cried one of the men, "I believe there's a water hoile into 'the Brattle.'"

"The Brattle" was an old pit which had been worked out years ago.

Just at this moment Mr. Murgatroyd, the manager, drove up, leaped out of the dog-cart, and joined them. Cook explained the accident to him, while one of the men rebound the bandage about Lawley's forehead.

"Mr. Lawley has been down, and got badly hurt, as you see, and it's a wonder he wasn't killed. There's another!" as a sound like distant thunder came up through the shaft.

"Does it drain into the Brattle, Mr. Murgatroyd?" asked Lawley.

"Yes; but that won't help us much, the Brattle's foul as a cesspool. It hasn't been worked this twenty years."

"Does the drain come out near the shaft?"

"I can't say. It was before my time."

"Who knows anything about the Brattle?" asked Lawley of Cook. He was irritated at the calculating coolness of Mr. Murgatroyd, who, to tell the truth, was thinking more of the blame that might attach to him for the accident than of the lives of the miners.

"Bob o' Ben's has worked in it. Him that's watchman at the coal stays."

"Mr. Murgatroyd," cried Lawley excitedly, "will you order a corve and windlass to be taken to the mouth of the Brattle, and let us pick up Bob o' Ben's and drive there at once?"

"What's the use? Who'll go down when we get there?"

"I'll go."

"It's all nonsense," began the manager, piqued at the management being taken out of his hands in this way.

Lawley was a very decided person when he chose, and now life and death seemed to hang upon his decision.

"Cook," he said imperiously, "take that rope and bucket to the dog-cart. We haven't a moment to lose, Mr. Murgatroyd."

The manager, seeing that the responsibility he dreaded would be crushing if he was the means of shutting off this last chance, such as it was, followed Lawley sulkily to the dog-cart. While they were waiting for Cook to join them with the rope and bucket, Lawley again suggested that a corve and windlass be sent on at once to the Brattle, and the manager rather sullenly gave the necessary order. Then Cook joined them with the rope and bucket, and got up behind as they drove off first to pick up Bob o' Ben's. On the way, Lawley took out his pocket-book, wrote in it for a few minutes, and then asked the manager and Cook to attest their signatures. "It's my will," he said, "in case anything happens me." Whereupon the manager became amiable, reflecting that, after all, he who paid the piper might well call the tune, and that the parson was certainly paying the piper in this case. From Bob o' Ben's they gleaned (out of an immense mass of valuable but irrelevant information about his experiences, man and boy, in the coal-pits) that the watercourse came out close to the bottom of the Brattle's shaft in a direction which he made plain enough to Lawley, who had been down a pit many times before. Bob o' Ben's was of opinion that the air at the bottom of the Brattle's shaft might be pure enough for anyone else to go down, but he didn't care himself to have to do with the adventure. "He warn't paid for it," he said.

But when you did get down, Bob o' Ben's believed the next thing you would have to do would be to come up again, for the drain was sure to be too narrow, and pretty sure to be too foul, for anyone to crawl along it. With which view both Cook and the manager were disposed to agree.

"But is there any other chance for the men?" asked Lawley.

"Well, no; I can't say there is."

"And it is a chance?"

"Yes, it's a chance. Do you think, Cook, any of the men themselves are likely to know of the passage?" asked the manager of the steward.

Cook shook his head, while Bob o' Ben's was even more positive as to their ignorance. Indeed, he seemed to think no one knew anything but himself. By this time they had reached the bye path leading to the Brattle and leaving the horse in charge of Bob o' Ben's, they hurried to the pit mouth, which was covered in with planks. There was already a large crowd about it, but the corve and windlass had not yet come.

"There's not a moment to lose," cried Lawley.

"Come, my lads," said the manager, "which of you will go down?" He hoped some unmarried collier would volunteer, since his life was worth less and his experience more than Lawley's. No one spoke.

"It's all right," said Lawley, who had already taken off his coat and

waistcoat and put them and his pocket-book (in which his will was) into the manager's hands. "It's all right. If it's a fool's errand I ought to go on it myself."

In a few minutes the planks were torn up, and Cook and two other men brought the rope and bucket and safety-lamp from the dog-cart. Lawley stepped into the bucket, took the safety-lamp, and was just about to be lowered into the shaft, when a gigantic miner stepped forward, took his hand, gripped it till the blood left it and the tears came, and said—probably to encourage him—"Good-bye, sir."

It wasn't encouraging, but it was affecting, and affected many of the men. Certainly Lawley was not a cheerful picture, with the soaking bandage, like a coronet of blood, round his forehead, and his pale face all the paler for its crimson stains.

"Not 'Good-bye,' I hope, Mathew, but 'God be with you.' God bless you all!"

Those who could trust themselves to answer said, "God bless you, sir!" huskily, some of them; others were silent, but looked the blessing through tears. It was not this single act of self-devotion that so moved and unmanned them, but the life lived for others of which this act was the crown.

"Lower away, my men."

In another moment he had disappeared, and there was the silence of death while the rope was being paid out, when the bucket at last bumped the bottom, and for the first five minutes after, while they waited for the signal to draw up which most of them expected. It did not come. Whether he would not or could not give it, no one could say. He might be lying dead, suffocated, at the pit bottom, or he might be making his painful way along the drain. In the hurry of the moment they had forgotten to pre-arrange a signal to assure them of his safety up to the mouth of the drain. The suspense was great, and grew. It became intense and all but intolerable as the crowd about the pit increased enormously, and was leavened and infected by the agony of the wives and mothers of the imprisoned miners. It was nearly nine o'clock when Lawley was lowered down the shaft. An hour later two men volunteered to go down and search for him, as far, at least, as the mouth of the drain. They had first, however, satisfied themselves as to the purity of the air by lowering a naked lamp and leaving it for some minutes at the bottom. It came up still alight. Then the two volunteers were lowered, remained some minutes at the bottom, and were drawn up again. They reported that the bottom of the shaft was pure enough, but that the air of the drain was very foul. They had no doubt at all that Lawley lay dead in it, and that it would have been death to them to have searched for his body. The sensation this news created was indescribable. It was as though the vast crowd had heard of the accident then for the first time. Something between a sob and groan broke simultaneously from the men, while the women uttered shriek upon shriek.

"Silence!" cried a stentorian voice.

In a moment there was the silence that might be felt. The speaker—the gigantic miner, Mathew—lay on the ground, stooping over the pit. Suddenly he sprang up like a madman and shouted, "Hurrah! I hear them! Stop! Listen!" Every one held his breath, and every one heard the faint shout from below. "Answer it, boys!" shouted Mathew, standing on the bottom of the upturned bucket, and acting as fogleman. "Hip, hip, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!" The shout might have been heard at Weston. Meanwhile the corve was being lowered, quick as the windlass could be unwound. It reached the bottom. The rope was chucked. It was hauled up. There were eight in it, looking as though they had come back from the grave—as, indeed, they had. White and exhausted, they could tell their story only by gasps. They had given up all hope of life as the air was fouling fast, and had all gathered together in the black-bed, or upper pit, where the air was purest, and had just knelt down to pray at the suggestion of a mere lad, one of Lawley's teachers, when the boy shrieked, and fell back almost fainting. All looked round and cried out in terror, for if ever a man looked like a spectre Lawley did, in the dim light of their failing lamps, as he came towards them, all white, in his shirt and drawers, his face like marble where it was not blood-stained. He soon reassured them, and hurrying them to the mouth of the drain, sent them all before him—the boys first and then the men. The drain was not so narrow as had been supposed, but was very long and very foul—fouler than the foulest part of the pit they had left—and seemed to strangle their strength so that they made slow way through it. They had got through, however, thank God, and here they were. By the time the first batch (who were all boys) had told their story piecemeal and incoherently, the last batch were being expected with breathless eagerness, for Lawley would be with them. The very women, with their sons and husbands just restored to them, and standing by them, had their eyes turned still towards the pit mouth.

There was some delay, or there seemed some in the deep silence and suspense. At last the signal came, and the crowd drew a long breath of relief at sight of the first wind of the windlass. There were only four to come—three miners and Lawley, and the windlass went round quickly with its light load. It was lighter even than they looked for, as there were but three in it when it came to bank—the three miners only. Lawley had not followed them out of the drain. They had shouted, but he had not answered, and could answer to no shout henceforth but the voice of the Archangel at the Resurrection. He lay dead midway in the watercourse. He had been very weak from want of food and sleep to begin with, and had been still further weakened by loss of blood, and so fell an easy prey to the breath of death in the foulest part of the drain. There was a rush of volunteers to the corve, which, filled in a moment with seven miners and a doctor, was lowered away swiftly. Then, for

half-an-hour, there was a kind of religious hush, in which those who spoke spoke under their breath. It was now as though, not a few women only, but the whole crowd had each a life dear to him at stake. All Lawley's kindnesses—and his life had been all kindnesses—came back to them vividly as the day they were done, and all looked and felt as though they stood in a sick-room where the life and death of one near to them trembled in the balance. When little more than half-an-hour had passed, the windlass was again seen to turn, very slowly this time, as doubtful what its burden would be. When it reached the top there was a wild shout of joy from those who saw Lawley, as it seemed, standing upright (for he had to be held upright to be drawn up), but in another moment the body was seen to be borne as they bear the dead. Mathew, mounting his modest pulpit, amid a hush in which every breath was held, tried to speak, but his voice broke into a sob which told his story better than words. There was an overpowering revulsion of feeling. Strong men broke down and cried like children. For hours there had been a terrible strain on the nerves of suspense, excitement, and the alternations of joy, agony, hope, and despair, and this in a vast crowd where every beat of the heart is, so to say, reverberated and magnified a hundredfold through sympathy. The effect, therefore, of this crushing blow on nerves already strained to their utmost tension was almost hysterical. The men in the inner ring, looking down on the peaceful face, which seemed asleep with its eyes open, wept without disguise or sense of shame, or self-consciousness, or consciousness of anything or any one but the dead. They were quite unnerved and helpless, and could do nothing and think of nothing; and it was a woman, strangely enough, who, with a coolness that seemed cruel, ordered the arrangements for the removal of the body. She had it laid on a door brought from a cottage near, she shrouded it with her shawl, and ordered the least exhausted of the rescued miners to bear it home, and marshalled the rest with their wives and mothers as chief mourners. The vast crowd followed silent and bareheaded. As they were passing through the little village which was the home of most of the rescued miners, the bearers stood still—broke down, indeed. The same thought at the same moment was in all their minds—that he had taken their place; that, but for the dead, there would not have been a house here without its dead. So the eight bearers, weak to begin with, broke down altogether and had to be replaced, and then the procession moved on, increasing as it went, till it reached his home—that home where, too, his only mourners were strangers he had been kind to—the little children of his hospital.

No one should judge West Riding poor on the surface, or at sight, or by a conventional standard. The woman who showed this hard presence of mind preserved the shawl like a relic, and twenty-four years later, on her death-bed, desired that it should be her shroud.

CHAPTER XLVII.

FENTON GRAVEYARD.

LAWLEY's will was not characteristic of a misogynist. Having no near relations he divided the bulk of his property between the two women who had wrecked his life—his brother's widow and Mabel. Mabel's portion, indeed, was left to her delicately under cover to George, but it was love, not friendship, which inspired the bequest. Still more eccentric was his choice of an executor, which fell upon Robert Sagar, Esq. Lawley himself was the worst business man in the world, which will account for his idea (got from Mr. Sagar) that Bob was the best. Besides, Bob, as a kind of guardian of Mabel's, naturally occurred to a mind filled with Mabel.

It was a fortunate choice for Bob, and brought him, as we shall see, the happiness of his life.

Bob was not at the Queen when Mr. Murgatroyd—who took the liberty to read the will an hour after Lawley's death—sought him up there. However, Bob was easy to trace in Wefton, where he had attained to the celebrity of Lucian's *Οὗτος ἑκείνους*! Men stopped to look at the stupendous figure as it rolled through the streets, women (Irishwomen) curtsied to him, and the street boys cock-a-doodle-dooed after him—for this had been the war-whoop of the Crowe faction during the election. Bob took it all in good and gracious part, smiling like Malvolio, unless when some miscreant made a derisive allusion to his corpulence, now—thanks to “No more Stomachs”—truly portentous. Then, indeed, Bob had to console himself with the reflection that the greatness he had achieved had its penalties no less than its privileges. But, these brutalities notwithstanding, Bob felt justified in thinking himself the most popular man in Wefton, so he walked its streets as a captain walks his quarterdeck, with an authoritative roll. Therefore Mr. Murgatroyd had no difficulty in tracking the village Hampden from the Queen's to Mabel's, where, indeed, Bob was busy adjusting a new kind of window-blind, which was to have gone up and down with a spring, but which could never be got henceforth to go either up or down at all.

Fortunately, Mabel was not in when Mr. Murgatroyd told his news. Bob was so horrified at it, and at Mabel's share in it, that he had no room in his heart for even an under thought of pleasure at the compliment paid to his business capacity—the highest possible compliment that could be paid him. He could think for the moment only of Mabel and of the best way to break the shock of the news to her. It was a kind of business for which poor Bob had the least fitness or fancy of anyone in the world; and therefore, after some perturbed thought, he rushed off, first of all, to telegraph to Lady Saddlethwaite. Then he hurried back to keep Mabel on her return from hearing the news from any less considerate friend. But when Mabel, on her return, met Bob at the door

with his kind-hearted face overcast, and as indicative of news of death as an envelope an inch deep in black, she faltered out at once, "Who is it, Mr. Sagar?" Of course she thought it was George.

"It isn't anyone," cried Bob, confused by the failure of his frank face to keep a secret for a moment. "It's Lady Saddlethwaite. I mean she's coming to see you. There; come in and sit down. It's not from Australia—it isn't, indeed," taking Mabel's hand and leading her into the room and to a chair.

"It's Mr. Lawley?" looking up into Bob's troubled face with the hopeless yet appealing look of one who pleads against a sentence he knows to be inevitable. It was a relief to be assured of George's safety, but even that relief gave place in a moment to this other and only less poignant anxiety.

"I believe he's badly hurt," said Bob helplessly; "there's been a pit accident, and he went down and saved all the men, and got cut about the head a bit, and caught by the choke-damp."

"I must go to him," cried Mabel, rising with the sudden strength of excitement and of a fixed resolution. In her mind at the moment was a letter she had written him the day after she had heard of George's being alive, a letter which soothed even Lawley's wounded spirit. It seemed to come, as it had come, hot from her heart. It was full of all he had been to her, and of all he would be ever to her, and of her own unhappiness in having so little to give in return for it all. There could not have been a more simple, touching, and complete expression of a love which was everything but what Lawley asked, and of a regret, which was all but a remorse, that it stopped short only of this. This letter was in her mind as she sprang up; its coldness, its thanklessness, its heartlessness. And now he was dying, perhaps! might die before she could see him and bare her whole heart to him, its love, and its longing to give her life for his.

There was a good deal of selfishness in these thoughts, alloying what was unselfish in them, it is true; but this is only to say that Mabel was human.

"You will come with me, Mr. Sagar?"

"He's too ill to see anyone, Mabel. He's unconscious, and the doctors are very doubtful. Now, do sit down, dear; it's no use; and Lady Saddlethwaite will be here soon," floundered Bob, more and more helplessly.

"He's dead!" cried Mabel with a wild look, as though she saw him as he lay that moment, white, still, and cold. She sat down again with this fixed, wild look still in her eyes, certain and silent—poor Bob silent also.

"If I had only seen him—only once," she moaned piteously after a while; "but he'll never know now." And, indeed, this, which was her first thought was her last thought. To the end of her life the thought of what she would consider the coldness of her last letter (and she often

thought of it) ached in her heart like an old wound. Now the shock of this terrible news broke her down completely, and she lay prostrate for weeks ill of what the doctor called a low fever.

Bob, leaving Mabel in Lady Saddlethwaite's charge, thought it incumbent upon him as executor to set out in the evening for Fenton. He was really as sorry for Mabel's sorrow, and for his friend Lawley too, as any kind-hearted man could be; and yet for his life he couldn't help feeling a sense of pride and importance in his executorship stir within him when he had got over the first shock of the news; for there was nothing of which Bob had become so proud as of his business ability. He was not the first great man who thought nature meant him to walk on his head, so to speak—"*Optat ephippia bos piger; optat arare caballus.*"

Bob then, we say, hurried off to Fenton Vicarage to look after his duties and make all the necessary arrangements for the funeral. As, however, he passed through the village and saw all the blinds down, and groups of women about the doors, and men at street corners talking together with sad face and subdued voice, he again forgot his business character and thought only of Mabel's loss and his own.

At the vicarage the McGucken met him at the door. She was a kind-hearted woman and truly attached to Lawley, but much of her grief was swallowed up by the immense consolation of the remembrance of all she had been to him and done for him, and by her indignation at the state of dirt in which the crowd had left the house.

"Coming and going as if it was a pothouse, and making no more of one than if aw war the muck under their feet. And muck enough they made, Mr. Sagar, sir, if you will me believe, and him lying dead above that couldn't bide to see a speck or spot on tile or table; and little had he seen for up aw allus war late and early, a-rubbing, and a-scrubbing, and a-tubbing, and a-sweeping, and a-polishing till my knees war that sore aw couldn't bide to say my prayers on 'em; aw couldn't. But prayers is for them as has nowt else to think on but theirsens, not for sich as has childre to follow, and a haase to tidy, and a master to do for as aw hev done for him. Niver a man in this warld was better done for, that aw can say, and nobbody could say nowt else, and aw only hope he'll be as weel done for where he's goan"—a hope expressed despondently and with doubtful tears. Bob's kind heart was too much moved by the darkened house, and what its darkness symbolised and helped him to realise, for him to smile at the McGucken's doubt of Heaven being Heaven to Lawley without her.

When he had at last got rid of her, he sat sad in the still study, thinking of the last time—not so long since—he had sat there listening and learning many things from Lawley's brilliant talk. At last he rose, moved by a sudden impulse, to go and see the dead. He stole upstairs noiselessly, partly in reverence and partly to elude the McGucken's vigilance, and went on tiptoe along the corridor to Lawley's room. The

door was wide open and he paused at it for a moment, fearing the McGucken was within, but all seeming still, he entered.

It was night, the room dim, the gas down, and Bob, unused to death, stood in nervous hesitation inside the door. He could hear his heart beat, and he could hear—he was sure he could hear—in the frozen silence, from the bed where the body lay shrouded within curtains, the sound of a sleeper's regular breathing. It took him a little time to summon up courage to advance to the gas and turn it up, and then, after another hesitation, to steal to the foot of the bed. Here he was startled in a way very different from that he half expected. Lawley lay sleeping the breathless sleep; but, beside him, sharing his pillow, her face flushed insleep, all but touching his, and making it by contrast more ghastly, lay a little girl, between three and four years of age, fast asleep, her long eyelashes wet with tears, and her bosom heaving still in sleep with the swell of a storm of sobs. One word, in passing, to this little chief mourner, who was to be all the world to Bob.

She had been brought to the hospital nearly a year ago, ill mainly of starvation and neglect, from which she soon recovered. As, however, her mother was dead and her father was an irreclaimable drunkard, Lawley had not the heart to send back the bright, pretty, engaging child to misery and degradation. Even the McGucken was moved by her winning face and ways to tolerate her. She had fast grown to be such a pet with Lawley in his loneliness, that when she could elude the McGucken she would steal, sure of a welcome, into his bedroom before he was up in the morning, and in the evening, before her bed-time, into his study. The child had much of her dead mother in her—a refined and affectionate woman—and Lawley had resolved to bring the little one up to be what nature had meant her to be, a lady. As for Amy, Lawley was father, mother, sister, brother, all to her. When Sarah Jane, eager to find anyone who had not heard the news, rushed up to tell the sick children that Mr. Lawley was dead, Amy took her to mean that he was very ill. She was but a year old when her mother died, and knew not yet of death, imagining it to be simply the superlative of illness—an impression confirmed by Sarah Jane's tears.

Illness Amy knew too well, and that he should be *very ill* was terrible to her. In the confusion no one heeded her or her timid questions, and she was kept strictly confined to the hospital end of the house all that day. At night, however, when she could not sleep through thinking of this trouble, she stole out of bed and along the corridor to Lawley's room. She pushed open the door, which was ajar, crept to the bed, climbed up upon it by means of a chair, and saw by Lawley's ghastly face and closed eyes that he was very ill and asleep, and not to be disturbed. She would wait till he waked, as she had done many a morning, and while waiting and sobbing piteously over the terrible change in the face that was as the only face in the world to her, she fell asleep at last from exhaustion.

So it came about that Bob found the little flushed face, whose troubles were beginning, nestling in the shadow of the still, set, marble face, whose troubles were over. A harder-hearted man than Bob would have been touched by the picture, and by its suggestions of love and sorrow, and of all that is best in our nature and worst in our lot, and Bob was touched by it.

While he stood looking on it, hesitating to disturb the child, hesitating to leave her there, she woke from her troubled sleep, roused either by the glare of the gas or by Bob's concentrated gaze.

After a hurried look at the stranger, whom she took for a doctor, she turned at once to see if Lawley was yet awake.

"I didn't wake him," she said in a guilty voice to Bob.

"No, dear," said Bob, not steadily. "Let me carry you back to bed."

Amy looked back wistfully at the still face with half a hope that their talking might have waked him, and that she might get a reprieve, or at least a word, a touch, a look from him before she was taken away. While looking for some sign of waking she forgot Bob altogether, for the gash in the forehead, seen now in the full glare of the gaslight, had a horrible fascination for her. She sat up transfixed, a piteous picture of horror, till Bob broke the spell.

"Come, dear," taking her up in his arms.

"I may come when he wakes. I may come in the morning. He lets me come in the morning when he wakes," beseechingly.

"Ay, dear; you may come when he wakes."

All Bob's kind heart was in his face and in his voice, so that Amy, though a shy and shrinking child, put both her arms round his neck as he carried her first to the gaslight to lower it, and then from the room—her head being turned over his shoulder toward the bed and its burden to the last.

She guided him to her room, and Bob, having put her back to bed, sat by her till she should fall asleep. But she did not soon fall asleep. She lay long wide awake, though still; the pale face with that terrible gash in the forehead looking down upon her distinctly out of the darkness. Bob, hearing that she was crying quietly by an occasional sob, soothed her now and then as he could by caresses and caressing words, till at length "Nature's soft nurse, balm of hurt minds," came to relieve him.

We have dwelt upon Bob's finding of Amy because it was a fortunate accident for him. The impression she made upon him that night was more than confirmed in the next few days of her utter desolation when he had at last to make clear to her the meaning of death. Of all the bitter tears dropped on Lawley's grave, the most bitter were those shed by this little chief mourner as she looked down upon it from Bob's arms. There is no sorrow like a child's sorrow, for in its intensity it is eternal, without hope of end, break, or morrow to it. And Amy's wretchedness so

wrung Bob's heart that he begged her from George (to whose care Lawley had bequeathed her) and adopted her. No kind act was ever better rewarded. Amy, as a child, girl, and woman was henceforth the happiness of Bob's life, more to him even than his world-wide political fame as member for Bally-Banagher and leader in the House of Commons of one of the seven sections into which the union of Irish patriots of all ranks and creeds against the tyranny of the Saxon resolved itself in a single session.

Nor, in taking a kindly leave of our kind old friend, should we omit to mention a third source of his happiness, his discovery of the genuine "No more Stomachs" receipt—a sleepless attendance on the Speaker's eye in that august House:—

Where prosy speakers painful vigils keep,
Sleepless themselves to give their hearers sleep.

If Bob's vigils did not quite reduce him to "an eagle's talon in the waist," at least they relieved him of the scurrilous notice of the street boys.

A graveyard is an appropriate place for partings. There, late or soon, we part from all, or all from us. Here, then, at Lawley's grave, we take leave of others besides Bob, of Dr. Clancy, who, for his knowledge of Greek, was made a missionary bishop of the South Sea Islands; of Mr. Gant, who obtained at last the pinnacle of his ambition, persecution in its most fiery form—a prosecution for ritualistic practices; of Josiah Pickles—we beg his pardon—Sir Josiah Pickles, for his large contributions to the Carlton electioneering funds was rewarded with knighthood; and of Clarence, who married a poor but highly accomplished girl, who with one set of toes on the boards and the other set on a level with her head could spin round like a top for two minutes together.

To come lower down, for we are getting dizzy at this height, here too we take leave of Barney McGrath, who had his own good reason for the tears he was not ashamed to shed at the grave. We should have said something of the prominent part Barney took against his old enemy, Josiah Pickles, during the election, but that poor Barney was not presentable for the greater part of that time. He threw his whole soul into the work, and did Bob yeoman's service for the first few days of the canvass, but before the close of the week he was tempted into breaking the pledge. His pledge once broken he drank furiously to drown remembrance of the breach and fell into the hands of the police—this time most justly. It would have gone hard with Barney if Lawley had not overtaken him in his carriage while he was being hauled off to the station. Lawley, recognising Mabel's *protégé*, stopped, and by a generous tip induced the police to commit Barney to his charge. Barney was shoved into the carriage, driven to Fenton Vicarage, and next morning, while overwhelmed with shame, remorse, and gratitude was reconverted to temperance. Henceforth Barney worshipped him with Celtic fervour, and now lamented him with Celtic demonstrativeness. Nor did he again relapse. He prospered exceedingly as a nursery-

man, and for the seventeen years of life that remained to him kept Lawley's grave beautiful with the choicest flowers the smoke of Fenton would allow to live.

At the grave side also we take leave of the McGucken, her eyes not so blinded by tears as to prevent her noticing that the sexton blurred with three handfuls of earth the coffin plate she had burnished like a mirror. She married a scavenger, a widower, with seven children and a temper, whom it took her ten years to bury.

At the graveside too we take leave of the Fenton folk, as warm-hearted a people as ever lived. For that day the factory was still, the mine empty, the school closed, and only the bedridden left in the houses. All men, women, and little children were in the church, the churchyard and its approaches, all in black, and nearly all in tears. A hymn was to have been sung at the graveside, but the singers broke down before they had got through the first verse, and all the crowd round the grave seemed as at a given signal to break down with them. It was such a scene as no one present ever remembered or ever forgot.

Lastly, at Lawley's grave, we take leave of Lady Saddlethwaite, Mabel, and George. Two days after George's return from Australia the three drove together on a pilgrimage to the grave, marked now by a cross of white marble, erected to his memory by the miners he had saved.

It was a silent drive, for even George was thinking of something besides Mabel. As they approached the grave three colliers (one with his hat off), who had been painfully spelling out the inscription, gave place to them.

It was a long inscription, loosely worded, but with this striking line at its close, "Erected to his memory by those for whom he lived and died."

"There's no finer epitaph in Westminster Abbey," said Lady Saddlethwaite as she read out the line, and then, after a pause, she added, "An heroic death is, after all, an easy thing compared with an heroic life, and there's no life more heroic than to choose to be unheroic and obscure for the sake of obscure and unheroic people."

"It's the life of many a clergyman," said George.

"It's the loveliest of all lives," said Lady Saddlethwaite emphatically.

Mabel said nothing, but looked through tears a hope which lay still deep in her heart—the hope, or rather the faith, for it has a higher source and sustenance than hope, that he will,

Perplex in faith, but pure in deeds,
Beat at last his music out,

and find there is an honest place for him in a church which is wide enough to comprehend a Clancy, a Gant, and a Lawley.

THE END.

Zoophily.

It is a comforting reflection in a world still "full of violence and cruel habitations," that the behaviour of men to domestic animals must have been, on the whole, more kind than the reverse. Had it been otherwise, the "set" of the brute's brains, according to modern theory, would have been that of shyness and dread of us, such as is actually exhibited by the rabbit which we chase in the field, and the rat we pursue in the cupboard. In countries where cats are exceptionally ill-treated (*e.g.* the South of France), poor puss is almost as timid as a hare, while the devotion and trustfulness of the dog towards man in every land peopled by an Aryan race seem to prove that, with all our faults, he has not found us such bad masters after all. Dogs love us, and could only love us, because we have bestowed on them some crumbs of love and goodwill, though their generous little hearts have repaid the debt a thousandfold. The "Shepherd's Chief Mourner" and "Grey Friar's Bobby" had probably received in their time only a few pats from the horny hands of their masters, and a gruff word of approval when the sheep had been particularly cleverly folded. But they recognised that the superior being condescended to care for them, and their adoring fidelity was the ready response.*

Two different motives of course have influenced men to such kindness to domestic animals, one being obvious self-interest, and the necessity, if they needed the creature's services, to keep it in some degree of health and comfort; and the other being the special affection of individual men for favourite animals. Of the frequent manifestation of this latter sentiment in all ages literature and art bear repeated testimony. We find it in the parable of Nathan; in the pictured tame lion running beside the chariot of Rameses; in the story of Argus in the *Odyssey*; in the episode in the *Mahabharata*, where the hero refuses to ascend to heaven in the car of Indra without his dog; in the exquisite passage in the *Zend*

* A touching story of such sheep gathering was recently told me on good authority. A shepherd lost his large flock on the Scotch mountains in a fog. After fruitless search he returned to his cottage, bidding his collie find the sheep if she could. The collie, who was near giving birth to her young, understood his orders and disappeared in the mist, not returning for many hours. At last she came home in miserable plight, driving before her the last stray sheep, and carrying in her mouth a puppy of her own! She had of necessity left the rest of her litter to perish on the hills, and in the intervals of their birth the poor beast had performed her task and driven home the sheep. Her last puppy only she had contrived to save.

Avesta, where the Lord of Good speaks to Zoroaster: "For I have made the dog, I who am Ahura Muzda;" in the history of Alexander's hero Bucephalus; in Pliny's charming tales of the boy and the pet dolphin, and of the poor slave thrown down the Gemonian stairs, beside whose corpse his dog watched and wailed till even the stern hearts of the Roman populace were melted to pity.

But neither the everyday self-interested care of animals by their masters, nor the occasional genuine affection of special men to favourite animals—which have together produced the actual tameness most of the domesticated tribes now exhibit—seems to have led men to the acknowledgment of a moral obligation on their part towards the brutes. As a lady will finger lovingly a bunch of flowers, and the next moment drop it carelessly on the roadside, or pluck the blossoms to pieces in sheer thoughtlessness, so the great majority of mankind have always treated animals.

We tread them to death, and a troop of them dies
Without our regard or concern,

cheerfully remarked Dr. Watts concerning ants; but he might have said the same of our "unconcern" in the case of the cruel destruction of thousands of harmless birds and beasts, and the starvation of their young; and of the all-but-universal recklessness of men in dealing with animals not representing value in money.

It is not, however, to be reckoned as surprising that our forefathers did not dream of such a thing as Duty to Animals. They learned very slowly that they owed duties to *men* of other races than their own. Only on the generation which recognised thoroughly for the first time (thanks in great measure to Wilberforce and Clarkson) that the Negro was "a man and a brother," did it dawn that beyond the Negro there were other still humbler claimants for benevolence and justice. Within a few years passed the Emancipation of the West Indian slaves and that first Act for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, of which Lord Erskine so truly prophesied that "it would prove not only an honour to the Parliament of England, but an era in the civilisation of the world."

But the noble law of England—which thus forestalled the moralists and set an example which every civilised nation, with one solitary exception, has followed—remains even to this day, after sixty years, still in advance of the systematic teachers of human duty. Even while every year sermons specially inculcating humanity to animals are preached all over the kingdom, nobody (so far as the present writer is aware) has attempted formally to include Duty to the Lower Animals in any complete system of ethics as an organic part of the Whole Duty of Man.*

* The best effort to supply the missing chapter of ethics, is the charming and eloquent volume, *Rights of an Animal*, by E. B. Nicholson. I thankfully recognise the candour wherewith the author has tackled the difficult problems of the case, and the value of his demonstration that the law of England assumes the fundamental prin-

Without pretending for a moment to fill up this gap in ethics, I would fain offer to those who are interested in the subject, a suggestion which may possibly serve as a scaffolding till the solid edifice be built by stronger hands. We must perchance yet wait to determine what are the right *actions* of man to brute; but I do not think we need lose much time in deciding what must be the right *sentiment*: the general feeling wherewith it is fit we should regard the lower animals. If we can but clearly define that sentiment, it will indicate roughly the actions which will be consonant therewith.

In the first place it seems to me that a sense of serious responsibility towards the brutes ought to replace our "lady-and-the-nosegay" condition of *insouciance*. The "ages before morality" are at an end at last, even in this remote province of human freedom. Of all the grotesque ideas which have imposed on us in the solemn phraseology of divines and moralists, none is more absurd than the doctrine that our moral obligations stop short where the object of them does not happen to know them; and assures us that, because the brutes cannot call us to account for our transgressions, nothing that we can do will constitute a transgression. To absolve us from paying for a pair of boots because our bootmaker's ledger had unluckily been burned, would be altogether a parallel lesson in morality. It is plain enough, indeed, that the creature who is (as we assume) without a conscience or moral arbitrament, must always be exonerated from guilt, no matter what it may do of hurt or evil; and the judicial proceedings against, and executions of, oxen and pigs in the Middle Ages for manslaughter were unspeakably absurd. But not less absurd, on the other side, is it to exonerate men, who *have* consciences and free will, when they are guilty of cruelty to brutes, on the plea—not that *they*—but the brutes, are immoral and irresponsible.*

A moral being is not moral on one side of him only, but moral *all round*, and towards all who are above, beside, and beneath him; just as a gentleman is a gentleman not only to the king but to the peasant; and as a truthful man speaks truth both to friend and stranger. Just in the same way the "merciful man is merciful to his beast," as he is merciful to the beggar at his gate. I may add that every noble quality is specially tested by its exhibition in those humbler directions wherein there is nothing to be gained by showing it, and nothing to be lost by contrary behaviour.

ciple that cruelty to an animal is an offence *per se*, and that it is not necessary to show that it injures any human owner or spectator. In this respect, as in all others, our Act (11 & 12 Vict. c. 39) immeasurably transcends the French *Loi Grammont*, which condemns only cruelty exhibited in public places and painful to the spectators. Mr. Nicholson justifies Vivisection only so far as it can be rendered absolutely painless by anaesthetics. To such of us as have seen through that delusion, *cadit questio*.

* As a recent example of this doctrine, see Dr. Carpenter's article in the *Fortnightly Review* for February 1, 1882. "Is it not," he says, "the very basis of ethical doctrine (!) that the moral rights of any being depend on its ethical nature?"

There is a passage from Jeremy Bentham, quoted in Mrs. Jameson's *Common Place Book* and elsewhere, which will recur to many readers at this point. "The day may come," he says, "when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withheld from them but by the hand of tyranny. It may come one day to be recognised that the number of legs, the villosity of the skin, or the termination of the *os sacrum* are reasons insufficient for abandoning a sensitive being to the caprice of a tormentor. . . . The question is not, Can they reason? or Can they speak? but Can they suffer?"

Long before Bentham, a greater mind, travelling along a nobler road of philosophy, laid down the canon which resolves the whole question. Bishop Butler affirmed that it was on the simple fact of a creature being SENTIENT—*i.e.* capable of pain and pleasure—that rests our responsibility to save it pain and give it pleasure. There is no evading this obligation, then, as regards the lower animals, by the plea that they are not moral beings. It is *our* morality, not *theirs*, which is in question. There are special considerations which in different cases may modify our obligation, but it is on such special reasons, not on the universal non-moral nature of the brutes (as the old divines taught), that our exoneration must be founded; and the onus lies on us to show cause for each of them.

The distinction between our duties to animals and our duties to our human fellow-creatures lies here. As regards them both we are indeed forbidden to inflict avoidable pain, because both alike are sentient. But as regards the brutes, our duties *stop* there; whereas, as regards men, they being moral as well as sentient beings, our primary obligations towards them must concern their higher natures, and the preservation of the lives which those higher natures invest with a sanctity exclusively their own. Thus we reach the important conclusion that the infliction of avoidable Pain is the supreme offence as regards the lower animals, but *not* the supreme offence as regards man. Sir Henry Taylor's noble lines go to the very root of the question:—

Pain, terror, mortal agonies, which scare
Thy heart in man, to brutes thou wilt not spare.
Are theirs less sad and real? *Pain in man*
Bears the high mission of the flail and fan;
In brutes 'tis purely piteous.

Pain is the one supreme evil of the existence of the lower animals; an evil which (so far as we can see) has no countervailing good. As to Death—a painless one, so far from being the supreme evil to them, is often the truest mercy. Thus instead of the favourite phrase of certain physiologists, that "they would put hecatombs of brutes to torture to save the smallest pain of a man," true ethics bid us regard man's *moral* welfare only as of supreme importance, and anything which can injure *it* (such, for example, as the practice, or sanction of the practice, of cruelty) as the worst of evils, even if along with it should come a mitigation of bodily pain. On this subject the present Bishop of Winchester has made

an admirable remark—viz. “that it is true that Man is superior to the beast, but the part of Man which we recognise as such is his moral and spiritual nature. So far as his body and its pains are concerned, there is no particular reason for considering them more than the body and bodily pains of a brute.”

Of course the ground is cut from under us in this whole line of argument by those ingenious thinkers who have recently disinterred (with such ill-omened timeliness for the vivisection debate) Descartes’ supposed doctrine, that the appearance of pain and pleasure in the brutes is a mere delusion, and that they are only automata—“a superior kind of marionettes which eat without pleasure, cry without pain, desire nothing, know nothing, and only simulate intelligence as a bee simulates a mathematician.” If this conclusion (on which modern science is to be congratulated!) be accepted, it follows of course that we should give no more consideration to the fatigue of a noble hunter than to the wood of a rocking-horse; and that the emotions a child bestows on its doll will be more serious than those we bestow on a dog who dies of grief on his master’s grave. Should it appear to us, however, on the contrary (as it certainly does to me) that there is quite as good evidence that dogs and elephants reason as that certain physiologists reason, and a great deal better evidence that they—the animals—feel, we may perhaps dismiss the Cartesianism of the Nineteenth Century, and proceed without further delay to endeavour to define more particularly the fitting sentiment of man to sentient brutes. We have seen we ought to start with a distinct sense of some degree of moral responsibility as regards them. What shape should that sense assume?

We have been in the habit of indulging ourselves in all manner of antipathies to special animals, some of them having, perhaps, their source and *raison d’être* in the days of our remote but not illustrious ancestors,

When wild in woods the noble savage ran;

or those of a still earlier date, who were, as Mr. Darwin says, “arboreal in their habits,” ere yet we had deserved the reproach of having “made ourselves tailless and hairless and multiplied folds to our brain.” Other prejudices, again, are mere personal whims, three-fourths of them being pure affectation. A man will decline to sit in a room with an in-offensive cat, and a lady screams at the sight of a mouse, which is infinitely more distressed at the *rencontre* than she. I have known an individual, otherwise distinguished for audacity, “make tracks” across several fields to avoid a placidly ruminating cow. In our present stage of civilisation these silly prejudices are barbarisms and anachronisms, if not vulgarisms, and should be treated like exhibitions of ignorance or childishness. For our remote progenitors before mentioned, tusked and hirsute, struggling for existence with the cave bear and the mammoth in the howling wilderness of a yet uncultured world, there was no doubt justification for regarding the terrible beasts around them with the hatred

which comes of fear. But the animal creation, at least throughout Europe, has been subdued for ages, and all its tribes are merely dwellers by sufferance in a vanquished province. Their position as regards us appeals to every spark of generosity alight in our bosoms, and ought to make us ashamed of our whims and antipathies towards beings so humble. Shall man arrogate the title of "lord of creation" and not show himself at the least *bon prince* to his poor subjects? It is not too much to ask that, even towards wild animals, our feelings should be those of royal clemency and indulgence—of pleasure in the beauty and grace of such of them as are beautiful; of admiration for their numberless wondrous instincts; of sympathy with their delight in the joys of the forest and the fields of air. Few, I suppose, of men with any impressionability can watch a lark ascending into the sky of a summer morning without some dim echo of the feelings which inspired Shelley's Ode. This is, however, only a specially vivid instance of a sympathy which might be almost universal, and which, so far as we learn to feel it, touches all nature for us with a magic wand.

If we are compelled to fight with them—if they are our natural enemies and can never be anything else—then let us wage war upon them in loyal sort, as we contended against the Russians at Balaclava; and if we catch any prisoners, deal with them chivalrously, or at least mercifully. This, indeed (to do justice to sportsmen, much as I dislike their pursuit), I have always observed to be the spirit of the old-fashioned country gentleman, before the gross slaughtering of battues and despicable pigeon-matches were heard of in the land.

As to domestic animals, their demands on us, did we read them aright, are not so much those of petitioners for Mercy as of rightful claimants of Justice. We have caused their existence, and are responsible that they should be on the whole happy and not miserable. We take their services to carry our burdens, to enhance our pleasures, to guard our homes and our flocks. In the case of many of them we accept the fondest fidelity and an affection such as human beings scarcely give once in a lifetime. They watch for us, work for us, bear often weary imprisonment and slavery in our service, and not seldom mourn for us with breaking hearts when we die. If we conceive of an Arbiter sitting by and watching alike our behaviour and the poor brutes' toil and love, can we suppose he would treat it as merely a piece of *generosity* on our part, which we were free to leave unfulfilled without blame, that we should behave considerately to such an humble friend, supply him with food, water, and shelter, forbear to overwork him, and end his harmless life at last with the least possible pain? Would he not demand it of us as the simplest matter of *justice*? *

* I have endeavoured elsewhere to work out this hypothesis of an Umpire between man and brute, as a method of helping us to a solution of the problem of what are, and what are not, lawful actions on our parts towards animals. The reader who may be interested in the inquiry may obtain my pamphlet, the *Right of Tormenting*,

For those who accept the Darwinian theory, and believe that the relationship between man and the brutes is not only one of similarity, but of actual kinship in blood, it would have seemed only natural that this new view should have brought forth a burst of fresh sympathy and tenderness. If our physical frames, with all their quivering nerves and susceptibilities to a thousand pains, be indeed only the four-footed creature's body a little modified by development; if our minds only overlap and transcend theirs, but are grown out of those humbler brains; if all our moral qualities, our love and faith and sense of justice, be only their affection and fidelity and dim sense of wrong extended into wider realms, —then we bear in ourselves the irresistible testimony to their claims on our sympathy. And if, like so many of the disciples of the same new philosophy, we are unhappy enough to believe that both man and brute when laid in the grave awake no more, then, above all, it would seem that this common lot of a few pleasures and many pains, to be followed by annihilation, would move any heart to compassion. In the great, silent, hollow universe in which these souls believe themselves to stand, how base does it seem to turn on the weaker, unoffending beings around them and spoil their little gleam of life and joy under the sun!

Nothing is more startling to me than the fact that some of the leading apostles of this philosophy, and even its respected author himself, should in one and the same breath tell us that an ape, for example, is actually our own flesh and blood, and that it is right and proper to treat apes after the fashion of Professors Munk and Goltz and Ferrier. These gentlemen, as regards the poor *quadrumana*, are "rather more than kin, and rather less than kind."

For those who, whether they believe in Evolution or not, still hold faith in the existence of a Divine Lord of man and brute, the reasons for sympathy are, in another way, still stronger. That the Christian religion did not, from the first, like the Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Brahminist, impress its followers with the duty of mercy to the brutes—that it was left to a few tender-hearted saints, like S. Francis, to connect the creatures in any way with the worship of the Creator, and to the later development of Protestantism to formulate any doctrine on the subject of duty towards them—is a paradox which would need much space to explain. Modern religion, at all events, by whatever name it is called, seems tending more and more to throw an additional tender sacredness over our relations to the "unoffending creatures which He"—their Maker—"loves," and to make us recognise a latent truth in the curiously hackneyed lines of Coleridge concerning him who "prayeth best" and also loveth best "both man and bird and beast." Where that great and far-reaching softener of hearts—the sense of our own failures and offences—is vividly present, the position we hold to creatures who *have never done wrong* is always found inexpressibly touching. To be kind to them,

and rejoice in their happiness, seems just one of the few ways in which we can act a godlike part in our little sphere, and display the mercy for which we hope in our turn. Whichever way we take it, I conceive we reach the same conclusion. The only befitting feeling for human beings to entertain towards brutes is—as the very word suggests—the feeling of *Humanity*; or, as we may interpret it, the sentiment of Sympathy, so far as we can cultivate fellow-feeling; of Pity, so far as we know them to suffer; of Mercy, so far as we can spare their sufferings; of Kindness and Benevolence, so far as it is in our power to make them happy.

There is nothing fanatical about this Humanity. It does not call on us to renounce any of the useful or needful avocations of life as regards animals, but rather would it make the man imbued with it perform them all the better.* We assuredly need not, because we become humane, sacrifice the higher life for the lower, as in the wondrous Buddhist parable so beautifully rendered in the *Light of Asia*, where “Lord Buddha,” in one of his million lives, gives himself, out of pity, to be devoured by a famishing tiger who cannot feed her cubs, and

the great cat's burning breath
Mix'd with the last sigh of such fearless love.

We need not even copy the sweet lady in the *Sensitive Plant* who made the bees and moths and ephemeridæ her attendants:—

But all killing insects and gnawing worms,
And things of obscene and unlovely forms,
She bare in a basket of Indian woof
Into the rough woods far aloof,—

In a basket of grasses and wild flowers full
The softest her gentle hands could pull;
For the poor banish'd insects, whose intent,
Although they did ill, was innocent.

This is poetry not meant for practice, and yet even these hyperboles carry a breath as of Eden along with them. Of Eden, did I say? Nay, rather of the later Paradise for which the soul of the greatest of the prophets yearned, where “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.”

I will not attempt here to define how the sentiment of Humanity to the brutes, thoroughly ingrained into a man's heart, would make him decide the question of field sports. My own impression is that it would lead him to abandon first, and with utter disgust, such wretched amusements as pigeon-matches and *battues* of half-tame pheasants; and later, those sports in which, as in fox-hunting and coursing and duck-shooting, the sympathy of the sportsman with his hounds and horse, or his grey-

* In fact, many men who pursue such trades, notably butchers, are genuinely humane, and do their best to get through their work in the most merciful way. Several of them have recently expressed warm satisfaction on obtaining Baxter's Mask, whereby oxen may be instantaneously killed without the chance of a misdirected blow. The mask is to be obtained from Mr. Baxter, Ealing Dean, W.

hound or retriever, is uppermost in his mind, to the exclusion of the wild and scarcely seen object of his pursuit. In nine kinds of such sports, I believe, out of ten, it is rather a case of ill-divided sympathy for animals than of lack of it which inspires the sportsman; and not many would find enjoyment where neither horse nor dog had part—like poor Robertson, of Brighton, sitting for hours in a tub in a marsh to shoot wild duck, and counting the period so spent as “hours of delight!”

But there is one practice respecting which the influence of such a sentiment of humanity as we have supposed must have an unmistakable result. It must put an absolute stop to Vivisection. To accustom ourselves and our children to regard animals with sympathy, to beware of giving them pain, and rejoice when it is possible for us to give them pleasure; to study their marvellous instincts, and trace the dawnings of reason in their sagacious acts; to accept their services and their affection, and give them in return such pledges of protection as our kind words and caresses,—to do this, and then calmly consent to hand them over to be dissected alive—this is too monstrous to be borne. *De deux choses l'une.* Either we must cherish animals—and then we must abolish Vivisection,—or we must sanction Vivisection; and then, for very shame's sake, and lest we poison the springs of pity and sympathy in our breasts and the breasts of our children, we must renounce the ghastly farce of petting or protecting animals, and pretending to recognise their noble and lovable qualities. If love and courage and fidelity, lodged in the heart of a dog, have no claim on us to prevent us from dissecting that heart even while yet it beats with affection; if the human-like intelligence working in a monkey's brain do not forbid (but rather invite) us to mutilate that brain, morsel by morsel, till the last glimmering of mind and playfulness die out in dulness and death;—if this be so, then, in Heaven's name, let us at least have done with our cant of “humanity,” and abolish our Acts of Parliament, and dissolve our Bands of Mercy and our 300 Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty throughout the world.

The idea of Vivisection (to use the phrase of its 3,000 advocates who memorialised Sir Richard Cross) rests on the conception of an animal (a dog, for example) as “a carnivorous creature, valuable for purposes of research”—a mechanism, in short, of nerves and muscles, bones and arteries, which, as they add, it would be a pity to “withdraw from investigation.” The crass materialism which thus regards such a creature as a dog (and would, doubtless, if its followers spoke out, be found similarly to regard a man) is at the opposite pole of thought and feeling from the recognition of the animal in its higher nature as an object of our tenderness and sympathy. We cannot hold both views at once. If we take the higher one the lower must become abhorrent in our eyes. There is—there ought to be—no question in the matter of a little more or a little less of torture, or of dispute whether anæsthetics, when they can be employed, usually effect complete and final, or only partial and temporary, insensibility; or of whether such processes as putting an animal

into a stove over a fire till it expires in ten or twenty minutes ought to be called "baking it alive," or described by some less distressing and homely phraseology.* It is the simple idea of dealing with a living, conscious, sensitive, and intelligent creature as if it were dead and senseless matter against which the whole spirit of true humanity revolts. It is the notion of such absolute despotism as shall justify, not merely taking life, but converting the entire existence of the animal into a misfortune, which we denounce as a brutal misconception of the relations between the higher and the lower creatures, and an utter anachronism in the present stage of human moral feeling. A hundred years ago, had physiologists frankly avowed that they recognised no claims on the part of the brutes which should stop them from torturing them, they would have been only on the level of their contemporaries. But to-day they are behind the age; ay, sixty years behind the legislature and the poor Irish gentleman who "ruled the houseless wilds of Connemara," and had the glory of giving his name to Martin's Act. How their claim for a "free vivisection table" may be looked back upon a century to come we may perhaps foretell with no great chance of error. In his last book, published ten years ago, Sir Arthur Helps wrote these memorable words: "It appears to me that the advancement of the world is to be measured by the increase of humanity and the decrease of cruelty. . . . I am convinced that if an historian were to sum the gains and losses of the world at the close of each recorded century, there might be much which was retrograde in other aspects of human life and conduct, but nothing could show a backward course in humanity" (pp. 195, 196). As I have said ere now, the battle of Mercy, like that of Freedom,

once begun,

Though often lost, is always won.

Even should all the scientific men in Europe unite in a Resolution that "Vivisection is Necessary," just as all the Dominicans would have united three hundred years ago to resolve that *autos da fê* were "necessary," or as all the lawyers and magistrates that the *peine forte et dure* was "necessary," or, as our fathers would have done, that hanging for forgery was "necessary," yet the "necessity" will disappear in the case of the scientific torture of animals as in all the rest. The days of Vivisection are numbered.

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

* See Mr. Gurney's remarks on this matter in the preceding number of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE, and Dr. Hoggan's reply in the *Spectator* for February 11.

The Early Life of J. F. Millet.

THE artist of the *Angelus* and the *Semeur* is perhaps the painter of modern times to whom the epithet "heroic" applies most readily and fitly. His work has been described as "a painted epic," himself as "a Michelangelo of the glebe;" and to those who are in sympathy with his art and its motives, with the type and quality of his sentiment and the manner of its expression, the descriptions are only adequate, and the claims implied in them no more than just. Of course there are many to whom they must seem fantastically exaggerated. Millet has been but five or six years dead, and his triumph is but now beginning. The world has not yet had time nor opportunity to search out his meanings, which are profound—as Beethoven's were—nor to learn to understand his practice, which was peculiar—as was Rembrandt's; and for some time to come there must be picture-lovers not a few who will decline to feel interested in what he had to say, or to be at the pains of studying the terms in which he said it. There is likely to be no such dissent about the man himself; nor is it probable that there will ever be two opinions as to the interest of his life. His story is sad enough in many ways; but it is encouraging in the main, and it is eminently instructive. It may be divided into three parts: one, 1814–1837, telling of Millet's origin and education; another, 1837–1849, of his apprenticeship to art and his stay in Paris; a third, 1849–1875, of his sojourn in the Forest of Fontainebleau and his achievement as a finished and an individual artist. The last two are mainly records of production more or less unpopular, and effort more or less unsuccessful, in a worldly sense at all events; there are many such chapters in the chronicle of art, and there will certainly be many more. Of the first, the general colouring of which is one of contentment and tranquillity, the circumstances are uncommon and peculiar enough to seem worth lingering over and narrating with some fulness of detail.

I.

Gruchy is a little hamlet in the Norman commune of Greville, perched upon the iron cliffs of the Hogue, and overlooking the troubled waters of Cherbourg Roads. It was there, on October 4, 1814, that Millet was born. His birth year was the year of the Campaign of France, it will be remembered, and of the abdication at Fontainebleau; and, the true child of his time—which was one of desperate defensive wars and the agony of a great ambition, when hope and endeavour

alternated with doubt and dejection, and general distress had created a disposition to individual charity—he seems to have always retained an impression of his ante-natal circumstances. He was a man strong in heart and intellect, and noble and dignified in character, with an indomitable will and a lofty audacity of purpose. But his imagination, while it was heroic and daring, was also mystical and solemn; he perceived the melancholy of things more readily than the joy in them; his message was one of peace and of pity. He represents the full and anxious year that gave him being as it must have seemed to the strong, patient, long-suffering class from which he sprang. Genius and the artistic sentiment apart, he was a peasant of the best and highest type, with that development of certain special capacities and qualities—as quiet hardihood, tenacity under trial, and dignified and thoughtful submissiveness—which some five-and-twenty years of war and revolution and unwilling conquest might be expected to induce.

He was exceptionally fortunate in the circumstances of his early environment and the facts of his ancestry and immediate parentage. Few men have had such excellent preparation for a peculiar task, and fewer still have made so good a use of their opportunity. The bent of his genius and the nature of his function were determined for him from the first. He was a peasant born and bred, and in him the sympathies and aspirations of many generations of peasants found special expression. The several strains uniting in him—of Millet, and Jumelin, and Henry du Perron—were exceptionally choice and vigorous. His father, Jean-Louis, son of Nicolas Millet and Louise Jumelin, came of an alliance between two families of varying temperaments and widely different capacities. The characteristics of the Millets were honesty, sobriety, simplicity, and laboriousness; in the Jumelins, with all of these, there was a dash of mysticism, a note of imaginativeness, a tendency to intellectual and emotional independence. The Millets worked hard, lived cleanly and kindly, and worshipped humbly and with all their hearts; the Jumelins practised science, and essayed adventure, and were versed in theology, in the moralists, in the literature and doctrine of Port-Royal. Jean-Louis, the heir of the two houses, had the distinguishing qualities of both. Tall and straight and limber, with fine hands and mild black eyes and curling and abundant hair, he was deeply religious, very thoughtful, very earnest and serious in temper, and so pure in heart and habit that his neighbours would refrain from oaths and coarse talk in his presence. And withal he was a kind of inarticulate poet. He had a fine voice and a good ear; the quire he led and trained was famed throughout the department; his music, says Sensier, is copied out in a hand that reminds you of a mediæval scribe's. He was fond of plants and trees, and interested in the ways and characters of animals, and curiously susceptible to the influences of nature; and he was always seeking to fix, or to translate, his impressions, sometimes by modelling in clay, sometimes by carving in wood. "Vois donc," he would say to

his son, as they were walking afield, "comme cet arbre est grand et bien fait; il est aussi beau à voir qu'une fleur:"—or, as they were looking out of window after the midday meal, "Vois donc comme cette maison à moitié enterrée derrière le champ est bien; il me semble qu'on devrait la dessiner ainsi." Of this good man's wife, *née* Henry, or Henry du Perron, nothing is recorded but that she came of a family of yeomen many generations old, and was a woman of exemplary life and a beautiful disposition. With her, as with her husband, devoutness was second nature. They were pious and charitable, as they were hardworking and thrifty and affectionate, without effort and without afterthought. They were poor, but they gave freely of their substance, and would accept of none but honourable gains. They were hardly literate, but they knew the Bible by heart, and Augustine and Jerome were household oracles with them. They worked as only French peasants can and do, but they remained generous and unsophisticated always; and when, years afterwards, Madame Millet writes to her son in Paris, she is found expressing herself in terms and with an accent that recall the mothers of antiquity. Nor were they alone in virtue among the members of their household. Had they stood in need of examples, they would have found them without crossing their own threshold. Domesticated with them were the painter's great-uncle, the Abbé Charles Millet, and his grandmother Louise. The Abbé, a man of great simplicity and sweetness, and of enormous personal strength, had been eased of his functions by the operation of the Revolution, and, after having been hunted for his life, had settled quietly down to till the fields he had been used to bless. He was a kind of ideal country curate, three parts labourer and one part churchman—a half-heroic *bête du bon Dieu*, one of the draught oxen of the Church; taking a pride in building walls and dykes, without help, of stones that he only could lift; teaching stray urchins their accidence and their catechism for the love of God, and to keep them out of mischief; watching over his infant grand-nephew with the imperturbable and slow solicitude of an animal for its young. The grandmother was of another temper. She was a woman of singular piety and humanity, and, for all her fervent Catholicism, a kind of unconscious Pantheist, who saw the Deity in all created things, and his action in all natural and human incidents. She had a great deal of character and intelligence, her culture was exceptional, she was full of morality and good counsel, hers was an enterprising and commanding personality; in another state of life she would certainly have been a personage of mark. She was the artist's god-mother; and she named him François after her patron, the good saint of Assisi, the lover of nature, the open-air apostle, the evangelist of the birds—as fortunate and appropriate a protector for a landscape painter, I think, as could well be found in the calendar. He was her special charge for many years, and her character and teaching were among the best and most active influences of his life. One of his earliest recollections is of a bright morning when she came and roused him from sleep,

saying to him, with gentle and loving reproachfulness, "Si tu savais comme il y a longtemps que les oiseaux chantent la gloire du bon Dieu;" and in 1846, she writes to him of the *St. Jerome* he is painting, and bids him "work for Eternity" always. "Pour quelque raison que ce puisse être," she adds in her antique and simple French, "ne te permets jamais de faire de mauvais ouvrages, ne perds pas la présence de Dieu; avec saint Jérôme, pense incessamment entendre la trompette qui doit nous appeler au Jugement." Her life and conversation were of a piece with these counsels; and Millet, who was passionately and devoutly attached to her, may well have had her in his mind when he painted and etched the third and eldest of his *Glaneuses*: the three majestic and mystical figures—as of priestesses upon a sacred beach, gathering the pebbles for some lofty and momentous act of divination—the "Parcæ of Poverty," as they have been called, in which he has embodied all the solemn and pathetic beauty and all the old-world dignity and romance of the gleaner's toil. His work, indeed, may be described as in some sort an expression of ideas that, in a greater or less degree and in one or another form, were common to the three or four of his immediate kindred of whom I have spoken. It is hard to believe that they would not have understood his greater pictures better than did, or could, the most enthusiastic of his critics. He dealt with facts they knew in a spirit that, elevated and ennobled as it had come to be, was, after all, the same with that in which they wrought out their own fortunes and lived their own lives. To me, indeed, they have a sort of share in Millet's whole achievement; for I cannot but think his character and genius, original and personal as they were, to have been largely inherited from them, and to have been deeply moulded and permanently impressed by them as well; so that they may, in a certain sense, be said to have been as much his masters as Poussin and Michelangelo themselves.

It is the same with his early environment as with the facts of his kinship. Walter Scott himself, the most fortunate of scholars, was not so well placed for the study of Border lore and Border character as Millet for the study of the external aspects and the inner meanings of peasant life. At Gruchy, between the green and pleasant Norman landscape and the solemn and mysterious seas, manners were simple, and life was earnest and hard. The villagers tilled their own little plots for food, spun their own linens, coopered their own tubs and pails, and carpentered their own tools and furniture. In summer time they lived much in the open air. On winter nights they gathered round the fire to sew and spin and work in wicker, and to tell old stories and sing old songs. They were no fishers. If they harvested the sea it was for weed and drift,* wherewith to fatten their fields and feed their hearths.

* Some of them made money now and then as smugglers' labourers. The contraband trade was still profitable; the Channel teemed with knavish luggers and sloops;

For they were essentially a race of husbandmen, and they had enough to do with reaping and shearing, and grafting and harrowing and delving, and the hundred other tasks of rustic labour. Of late the farmer and his lot have suffered change. Science has come to him, and steam, and machinery—"the Divil's oan team." He has grown positive and professional; and his trade, the oldest trade of all, has lost its antique airs of naturalness and individuality. In Millet's day its associations were yet biblical and solemn, its practice was yet personal and traditional. The sower still went forth to sow; and the painter's own *Semneur* is in some sort an illustration of the matter and spirit of the admirable line,

Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks,

of Robert Burns. The sentiment of gleaning was practically the same that it had been with Naomi and Ruth. The corn was reaped with sickles, and threshed upon a floor with flails, and ground into flour between stones under the impulse of water or of wind. The art of ploughing was human and majestic; and it was natural to see, upon some brown upland slopes, or far away on the luminous level of the plain, that noblest of all the sights of labour—a ploughman working with his team, the stately pacing horses, the shining shares, the alert and busy following of birds, the straight furrows lengthening and multiplying under the workman's will. The elemental forces were romantic and passionate as of yore; and to the shepherd watching his flock by night the darkness had all its terrors yet, and there was a mystical and sacred quality in the inexplicable stars. Ghostly presences were still formidable and dreadful, so that doubtfulness and awe came with the shadows, and the dawning light gave argument for gratitude and joy. Millet was reared upon the Bible, the most open-air of books, and bred to open-air employment under all the old solemn and picturesque conditions. Hardly had he entered upon his teens ere he went to work in the fields; and till two or three and twenty he was to all intents and purposes as diligent and complete a husbandman as Burns himself. During infancy, that is to say, and during youth and early manhood, while his imagination was at its quickest and freshest, and while his sympathies were readiest and most receptive, he was engaged in assimilating a world of sincere and memorable impressions. With the innumerable details of country life and labour he was familiar, both physically and intellectually, from the very first. He grew up among them, and took part in them; they entered into and became a portion of his being; he learned by actual experience to apprehend and express the peculiar sentiment of

and on dark and moonless nights, when cargo could be run, there was plenty of work for long-shore hands all down the coast. It is characteristic of the Millets that they would not meddle with this traffic, and would neither deal in smuggled wares nor handle smugglers' wages. They were strict, too, in the matter of wreckage, and would have nothing whatever to do with it.

each, as he learned to master its peculiar practice ; they were elements in an unconscious education of uncommon breadth and thoroughness, and they became the sole material of his art. It is not too much to say of him that, given the circumstances of his breeding and training, he could not have painted otherwise than he did. His work is the natural outcome of his life. He was in heart and mind the painter of the *Semeur* and the *Angelus* ere he quitted Gruchy ; he was "*Millet le Rustique*" while he was yet a labourer on his father's land.

II.

He has left some pleasant memoranda on his younger years, so that the nature of his surroundings and the tenour of his occupations are easily explained. He was the second child in a family of eight : his elder being the beloved sister Emilie, of whose death he has written so simple and touching an account, and who, until he left Normandy for Paris, was the dearest of his companions and friends. She was a good creature, it would seem—pious, diligent, fine-tempered, careful ; the model of what an elder sister should be. Millet has sketched her sitting at her wheel, in sabots and a linen cap, and in the short homespun skirts and quaint bodice of her country and class, and differing in no respect from the heroines of his most imaginative work ; and the portrait, of which the chief qualities are truthfulness and a tender melancholy, is like a page from the painter's early story. In after years he appears to have looked back upon his childhood and his youth as the only happy parts of his life. His memories were clear, definite, and pleasing ; he wrote them down affectionately and well, as if the task were a pleasure to him, and he felt himself a boy again in doing it.

Jean-Louis Millet tilled his own land, and had labourers in his employ to help him with the work. The farm-house in which he lived was rude enough in its way, no doubt, but there was always plenty to do in it, and there was always plenty to eat. In the garden was a great laurel tree by which Jean-François was always greatly impressed, and which he regarded as in some sort worthy of Apollo himself. An elm hard by the cottage divided his worship with the laurel, and afforded him matter for infinite meditation. "*Mon vieil orme,*" he writes to Sensier when over fifty years old, "*commence déjà à être rongé par le vent. Que je voudrais bien pouvoir le dégager dans l'espace comme mon souvenir le voit. O espaces qui m'ont tant fait rêver quand j'étais enfant, me sera-t-il jamais permis de vous faire soupçonner !*" That was the way in which he looked at nature from the first, and the way in which he prepared himself for his splendid share in the development of modern art. The glimpses of life in his father's house which he gives us elsewhere are cheerful and moving. "*Je me rappelle,*" he says, "*m'être éveillé un matin dans mon petit lit en entendant des voix de gens qui causaient dans la chambre où j'étais. Parmi les voix il se faisait une espèce de ronfle-*

ment qui s'interrompait de temps en temps. C'était le bruit d'un rouet, et les voix étaient celles des femmes qui filaient et cardaient la laine. La poussière de la chambre venait danser dans un rayon de soleil qui entraient par la fenêtre étroite et un peu haute qui donnait toute seule du jour à cette chambre." In one corner of the room, he adds, was a big bedstead, with a striped coverlet of brown and red, "retombant jusqu'à terre;" and against the wall stood a tall brown cupbroad. That is one of the earliest of his definite recollections. Mingled confusedly in his mind were vague memories of the time between sleeping and waking, and its many morning sounds:—"le va-et-vient qui se fait dans une maison, les cris des oies dans la cour, le coq qui chantait, le bruit du fléau dans la grange." Adventures and experiences were not wanting later on. Once, when three new bells were waiting to be christened and hung in the village belfry (the old ones had been taken away and cast into cannon), he went with his mother and a little girl named Julie Lecacheux to see them in the church. All his life long he remembered the feeling of wonderment he had when he found himself in a place "aussi épouvantablement vaste que l'église," which seemed to him "plus immense qu'une grange," and his admiration of the great windows with their diamond panes and leaden lattices. The bells, too, looked formidable and gigantic; and when Julie Lecacheux was so bold as to rap the biggest of them, which was taller than he was himself, with the church key, it gave forth a noise that filled him with amazement, and that he never forgot. He was much abroad with his uncle, the Abbé Charles, whom he plagued unmercifully, and whose despair and delight he was alternately. The pair would go visiting together at the great houses in the neighbourhood, where the old curate was well known and greatly regarded. At one of these he saw two peacocks, before whose tails he fell into a kind of ecstasy, which was increased when the lady of the house presented him with a slice of bread and honey and an inestimable and most gorgeous feather. At another, he was sometimes allowed to gather fir cones and take them away with him: "ce qui me causait une grande joie." As a rule, he seems to have been a solemn and diligent kind of urchin; but on one occasion, which he never forgot, he was guilty of chattering during mass, and when his uncle came forward to take him from his seat and set him on his knees, under a lamp in the quire, to do penance for his crime, he was so unfortunate, by some mischance or other, as to catch his foot in the good man's surplice, and to rend the garment badly ere he could extricate himself from its folds. The consequences of this dreadful deed, which the Abbé looked upon as deliberate and intentional, were terrible. "Accablé de l'acte impie que je venais de commettre," says Millet, "il me laissa sans me donner la punition pour laquelle il s'était dérangé, et retourna s'asseoir à sa place, où il resta plus mort que vif jusqu'à la fin de la messe. Je n'avais aucune espèce de conscience de l'énormité que j'avais commise; je fus donc bien étonné, tout le monde rentré de la messe, lorsque mon grand-oncle se mit à raconter (encore sous le coup de son

émotion) à toute la famille l'abominable action que j'avais commise sur sa personne, et qu'il ne balançait pas, je crois, à considérer comme une espèce de sacrilège. Un tel acte commis sur un prêtre lui faisait présager pour mon avenir les plus effroyables choses. Dire de quel air consterné toute la famille me regardait ne serait pas possible. Le fait est que je ne comprenais pas comment j'étais devenu tout d'un coup un objet d'horreur, et que mon trouble n'aurait pas pu être plus grand." The Abbé, who appears to have taught Millet his letters, died when his pupil was seven years old; and Millet remembered how, the day of his uncle's death, the servant came to fetch him home from school, that he might not shame the family by playing and shouting through the street with his schoolfellows. Another memorable circumstance occurred the day of the Abbé's funeral, when the little boy heard folks talking secretly and stealthily of the way in which they had arranged to fortify the new-made grave. There were to be big stones about the head of the coffin, it appeared, and a couple of trusses of hay over all:—"car, disait-on, c'est ce qui leur donne le plus d'embarras. Leur outil s'embarrasse d'abord dans les bottes de foin, et après, il se brise entre les pierres, ce qui les empêche de pouvoir crocheter la tête et de tirer le corps hors de la fosse." He did not know to whom the "leur" of this sentence referred, nor could he understand why a posse of labourers and friends, armed with guns and flails, should have spent several nights in succession drinking mulled cider and watching the Abbé's tomb. Afterwards he learned that they were on the look-out for body-snatchers. These ruffians, it seemed, were in the habit of coming in the night with long screws, which they planted from above in corpses newly earthed, and so screwed them gently from their graves. Belated villagers had often come upon them on their way from the churchyard, supporting their prey between them as if it were alive and drunk, and they were merely engaged in helping a fellow-creature in distress; or carrying it away *en croupe* on horseback, heavily cloaked, and with its arms tied round the rider's waist:—"mais on voyait les pieds qui passaient au-dessous du manteau." On grim stories of this sort, on legends of ghosts and wild rumours of goblins and fairies—one is sure that the romance of the Witch of Endor was a special favourite—the lad was nursed and reared. An old book, called the *Tableau des Visions Chrétiennes*, containing, he says, "les opinions d'un tas de casuistes sur une infinité de choses qui se passeront dans l'autre monde," was constantly in his hands; it had for him the fearful charm that Stackhouse's *History of the Bible* had for Charles Lamb. He was always a lover of ghosts, and to the day of his death he could never confidently say that he was not a believer in them, too. To me it has always been a matter of regret that he did not sometimes paint them. With his astonishing sense of atmospherical mystery and romance, his solemn and grandiose imagination, his unequalled capacity for the portraiture of gesture, he might, I think, had he been so minded, have produced a *Samuel and Saul*,

for instance, or a *Meeting of the Weird Sisters*, that would have proved a new and heroic development of the supernatural in art. The one essay, however, which he made in this direction, the tremendous *Le Bâcheron et la Mort*, turned out, so far as the Salon and the public were concerned, an utter and disastrous failure. The jury refused to give it a place in the exhibition; and though many of the critics—Alexandre Dumas among the number—took up the painter's cause, and proclaimed the merits of his work incomparable, he had considerable difficulty in finding a buyer, and was glad in the end to sell his picture for such a paltry sum as 40*l*. It is not surprising, after all, that with the exception of a strange and moving drawing of the *Ascension* the *Bâcheron et la Mort* should remain the painter's only achievement in legendary art.

In the matter of formal education his opportunities, irregular as they were, were in some sort good and fortunate: as even Mr. Ruskin has deigned resentfully enough to allow; and while he could he made a right use of them. At school he learned but little. His handwriting was fair and neat, and he could read anything; but he could get nothing by heart, and in arithmetic he never advanced beyond simple addition. He was better in the playground than at the desk, and he won his first fight gallantly enough. It came off as soon as ever he became a schoolboy. His fellows picked out a champion, put a straw on his shoulder, and dared the new comer to knock it off. This he did forthwith, and the consequences were battle and victory. His backers were much pleased with him. "Millet," they said, "n'a que six ans et demi, et il a battu un garçon de plus de sept ans." It was not until his twelfth year that he began to work hard at his books. Then, however, he had to prepare for his first communion, and in doing so he won the heart of the Abbé Herpent, the young priest who was teaching him his catechism, and fitting him to take the sacrament. The Abbé urged him to learn Latin; and though Millet at first declined to do so, inasmuch as he had to be a labourer and not a priest, he had in the end to sit down to his accidence, and to grind away at his *Selectæ e Profanis* and his *Epitome Historiæ Sacræ*. Presently, however, he fell upon the old Desfontaines' edition, in Latin and in French, of the *Bucolics* and *Georgics*, and had a revelation of the heroic in art, and of that epic quality in rustic life of which his own work was afterwards to present so many striking and lofty examples. Certain verses affected him prodigiously; and Virgil became a chief influence in his life, to be studied continually in the original tongue side by side with the Vulgate itself. Meanwhile the Abbé Herpent had removed to Heauville, a hamlet at some little distance from Gruchy, and had taken Millet with him. The boy, however, was a lover of home and of his kinsfolk, and for the five or six months over which his exile extended was fond of likening himself to Ovid among the Goths. On his return to Gruchy he began to read Latin with the Abbé Lebrisseux, who had succeeded the Abbé Herpent in his ministry, and found in him

a firm and kindly friend. Between them, they remind one of Wordsworth,—with whom Millet has so much else in common—and his colloquies with old Matthew :—

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

Millet at this time was an interesting child enough. A man visiting in the neighbourhood, a professor from Versailles, described him, indeed, after a day's talk with him, as "un enfant dont l'âme était aussi charmante que la poésie elle-même." Such as he was, he was never weary of questioning and confiding in the good Abbé Lebrisseux; and the Abbé for his part loved nothing better than to speak with the solemn, imaginative boy who at an age when others of his state in life were intent on nothing higher than chapman's literature, or the adventures of the Sons of Aymon, was deep in Virgil and in Job, and had thoughts of his own about the wandering, inexplicable sea, the pageant of the seasons, the mystery of sailing clouds and running waters, and all the majesty and romance of inanimate nature. There is no doubt that he recognised his pupil's genius, and there is none that, if he delighted in considering and developing it, he was often anxious and often troubled when he came to think of what the world would make of it. "Va, mon pauvre enfant," he would sometimes say, "tu as un cœur qui te donneras du fil à retordre; va, tu ne sais pas ce que tu souffriras." That was unhappily prophetic. But the evil days were as yet far off; and the future sufferer had naught to do for the moment but to feed his mind on great thoughts and good literature, and strengthen his body by toiling at his father's side in the fat Norman fields and meadows, to help to get bread for his seven little brothers and sisters.

He was never what is called cultured, but all his life he was a reader, and what he read he read well. At Gruchy he studied Virgil and the Bible, as I have already noted, with especial ardour and intention; but he grew conversant as well with authors like Arnault and Nicole, like Fénelon and Bossuet, like Jerome and François de Sales, like Augustine (in the *Confessions*) and Pascal, La Fontaine and Charron and Montaigne. During his apprenticeship at Cherbourg, his appetite for books appears to have been insatiable. His list of authors ranges from Shakespeare and Homer away to Paul de Kock and American Cooper. He knew Byron and Scott and Chateaubriand; he was deep in Schiller and Uhland and Bürger; he read Goethe and Corneille, and he read Hugo and Beranger; he was already versed in literature of many sorts—in the masterpieces of classicism and the lucubrations of romanticism alike—when he started for Paris, to worship the old masters in the Louvre, and to learn painting under Paul Delaroche. Years afterwards he is found delighting in Burns and in François Hugo's translation of Shakespeare, and projecting a version, informed with the authority of his own prac-

tical rusticity, of one of the Theocritean idylls. For the rest, his taste in literature was exceptionally sound. In his choice of books, as in his life and work, he was emphatically the "Jupiter en Sabots" of Gérôme's description. He liked nothing that was not strong and sincere. Affectation, corruption, falsehood, effeminacy, were eminently displeasing. He had as hard a word for the random cynicism of Musset as for the pictorial mummeries of Delaroche and the Devérias; he believed as little in the renovated maidenhood of Hugo's Marion Delorme as in the lackadaisical seuality of Ary Scheffer's Francesca de Rimini. He affected the heroic in letters, and was as passionate a worshipper of Homer and Shakespeare as of Jeremy and Isaiah themselves, divinely important in his belief as they were.

III.

Millet's artistic education appears to have been almost as informal in its beginnings as was the education of his mind. He was interested in the forms of things, and their relations to each other and to their surroundings, from the first, and he was young indeed when he began to draw. His first notions of design were derived from the prints in an old Bible. These he reproduced in pencil upon paper, or with chalk upon doors and shutters, as best he might; and no doubt he learned much from them. Not for nothing, however, was he a born great painter, and a student of Virgil and the Scriptures withal. He soon became dissatisfied with the imitation of other people's ideas, and anxious to express his own; and he took to drawing from nature. Of an afternoon, while his father slept—or feigned to sleep, the better to watch him at his work—he would sit at the window and sketch the open landscape without. He drew his father's horses and his cows and sheep. He made studies of trees, and studies of carts and ploughs. He reproduced on paper the house and the stables, the ivy on the wall, the dandelions in the grass, the fowls that fussed about the farmyard, the geese in the pond, the clouds in the sky, the waves on the sea; and his people were soon proud of him. One day he walked home from mass behind a bent and decrepit old man, and as he walked he studied the crooked spine, deflected at an angle from the point of curvature, and thrusting the head far forward from the centre of gravity. When he got home he took a piece of chalk and drew what he had seen upon the wall. It was a portrait *en de dos*, and so like that every one could swear to the original. What was of more consequence was that from that time forth the young man had a clear and workmanlike understanding of the principle of foreshortening. I may note in this connection that it was always Millet's way to find things out for himself, and to be extremely jealous of restraint and suspicious of authority. "Je suis venu à Paris," he says of himself at three-and-twenty, "avec mes idées toutes faites en art, et je n'ai pas jugé à propos de les modifier." That sentence gives the measure of the man. He had not seen a dozen good pictures in his life when he had to make

his choice between the old masters in the Louvre and the moderns in the Luxembourg; but he put aside the little talents for the men of genius as promptly and decisively as if he had been trained in the studio of Rembrandt himself. His master, Delaroche, considering the first study he produced, opined that he had painted much and often, when, as a matter of fact, he had never taken brush in hand before. It is evident that if he had failed to do great work he would have belied his destiny.

We may be sure that the portrait in chalk was seen and applauded by all the hamlet, and that the wisdom of keeping the artist at the ploughtail got to seem very questionable. Millet was about eighteen years old, and the feat, which was sufficiently surprising, appears to have made his father more anxious about the future than ever. It is not, I think, to be wondered at if the Millet family met often in council on the matter, or if, after many months of argument and doubt, Jean-Louis Millet at last determined to make his son a painter in right earnest, useful as he was upon the farm, and large as was the household whose bread he had helped so long to win. "Mon pauvre François," he said, "je vois bien que tu es tourmenté de cette idée-là : j'aurais bien voulu t'envoyer faire instruire dans ce métier de peintre qu'on dit si beau, mais je ne le pouvais ; tu es l'aîné des garçons, et j'avais besoin de toi ; maintenant tes frères grandissent, et je ne veux pas t'empêcher d'apprendre ce que tu as tant envie de savoir. Nous irons bientôt à Cherbourg ; nous saurons si tu as vraiment des dispositions dans ce métier pour y gagner ta vie." This manly and touching little speech (which Millet's biographer declares authentic) gave France her greatest painter. The young man at once produced a couple of drawings, to take, as specimens of his skill, to Cherbourg. Both were compositions, and in both he foreshadowed himself as he was presently to be—the Millet, that is to say, of the *Berger au Parc* and the *Grande Tondeuse*. "Vous connaissez mon premier dessin," he wrote long afterwards to his friend and biographer, "fait au pays, sans maître, sans modèle, sans guide ; il est encore là dans mon atelier ; je n'ai jamais fait autre chose depuis." In one of these works a shepherd played upon a pipe among his sheep, while his comrade lounged and listened hard by ; the costume was that of Gruchy, the scene was one of the fields on Millet's own farm. In the other, in darkness under a starry sky, a peasant stood at his cottage door giving bread to a beggar ; underneath was inscribed a verse from the Vulgate according to St. Luke. They were certainly most striking work ; for old Mouchel, the painter in Cherbourg, to whom Jean-Louis Millet submitted them for inspection, after flatly refusing to believe that the young bumpkin he saw before him could possibly be their author, turned round upon the anxious father and threatened him with eternal damnation for having kept a son with the makings of a great painter in him so long from labouring at his true vocation. In this way Millet's fate was decided. He became Mouchel's pupil, and spent two months with him, drawing from the cast and copying engravings,

Mouchel was an oddity in his way. He had been educated for the priesthood, but he had married and settled down to gardening and painting. He hovered continually between the practice of scepticism and the practice of piety—between open warfare with all the priests in the neighbourhood and the production of altar pieces, which he bestowed on any curate who might happen to be in want of one. He was a lover of animals, and spent hours in communion with a favourite pig, whose conversation he declared he perfectly understood, and for whose opinions he professed a great respect. Odd as he was, however, he had a right taste in art, for he worshipped Rembrandt, and was an ardent admirer of Brauwer and Teniers. He showed, too, a good deal of sound sense and discrimination in dealing with his new pupil, whom he refused to advise in any way: merely telling him to do exactly as he pleased, draw what he pleased, work how he pleased, go and come when he pleased, and make the best use he could of the materials at his disposal. Millet, as I have said, was suspicious of precept and example; and I doubt not that he obeyed his teacher to the letter. Things might have gone on in this way for a long time; but in 1835, some two months after the eventful journey to Cherbourg, Jean-Louis Millet died of brain fever, and the student had to return to Gruchy. He had resolved to give up art, and take his place as the head of the family, and work for his brothers and sisters; but of this his mother and grandmother refused to hear. The dead man's will, they said, was sacred to them. It had been the wish of his life that his son should be a painter, and it was not for them to set that wish aside. Matters must be with them as they might; they would do the best they could; Millet must return to Cherbourg and study his art. And this, after some debate, he did. He had been seen at work in the picture-gallery; many people had conceived an interest in him and in his prospects; and he was soon a student under the local artist. The local artist, whose name was Langlois, and who had been a pupil of Gros, showed himself as cautious in his dealings with Millet as Mouchel himself had been, though probably for very different reasons, and on very different grounds. He made him copy some of his old teacher's academical studies and some replicas of famous pictures; and he sent him back to work in the picture-gallery. There Millet produced a copy in crayons, 6 ft. long and 5 ft high, of Jordaens' *Adoration of the Magi*; with studies after Van Loo, Philippe de Champagne, Schidone, Van der Mol, and some of the older Flemings. And in 1837, on Langlois' recommendation, the municipal council allotted him a yearly pension of 400 francs—afterwards increased to 1,000 francs by the Council General of La Manche, and very seldom paid in full or up to date—and despatched him to Paris to finish his studies under Paul Delaroche, the idol of the Philistines, the stagiest of painters, the master whose art is to his own much as is *Hernani* to *King Lear*, or the *Book of Mormon* to the *Book of Job*.

He was eager, and yet afraid and doubtful. Paris, just then the

theatre of a noisy and successful revolution in aesthetics, was to him "le centre de la science et le musée de toutes les grandes choses ;" and he was impelled to adventure himself in it as by the promptings (he says) of a familiar spirit. All the same it was with many tears and misgivings—"le cœur bien enflé"—that he left his people and his home. The journey was all by broad, straight highways, between interminable rows of trees, and through vast flats of pasture :—"si riches en verdure et en bestiaux qu'ils me semblaient plutôt des décors de théâtre que de la vraie nature ;" and it only served to increase his sadness. It was a January evening when he alighted. The lamps were dim with a foul fog ; the streets were heavy with slush and dirty snow. The air, the smells, the clamour of wheels, the lights and voices and footsteps were too much for him, and he wept aloud in the street. He bathed his face at a fountain and went and munched an apple—a Gruchy apple!—before a printseller's window. It was full of Gavarnis and Devérias, of cheap sentiment and specious immodesty, and was more repulsive to him than the roaring streets themselves. He went off to bed in a cheap lodging house, and lay all night a prey to monstrous and affecting dreams : sometimes of his mother and grandmother weeping and at prayer for him ; and sometimes of pictures ablaze with colour and form—"que je trouvais si belles, si éclatantes qu'il me semblait les voir s'enflammer dans une gloire, et disparaître dans un nuage céleste." In the morning he arose to shudder at the vileness and squalor of his room, and gradually to grow calm and determined once more. But his melancholy abided with him, and he mourned for himself in the words of Job, "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, *There is a man child conceived.*"

These were his first impressions of Paris and the world. It was as if he had had a presentiment of the forty years of misery and derision and uphill battle their conquest was to cost him.

W. E. H.

Living Death-Germs.

THE conquests made by science are varied in character, sometimes seeming to promise a domain more hurtful (on the whole) than fruitful; a sort of intellectual Afghanistan. In other cases a land of promise seems before us, but the way to it is not clear. As an instance of the former kind, may be mentioned the progress which science is making in the study of explosive substances and the recognition of their power. Of the latter kind no more marked instance could be cited than the researches of Pasteur and others into the nature of the germs of various diseases, and the power of cultivating these germs so that their character may be modified.

Let us for a moment suppose it proved (though at present we have only promise of proof) that the disease-germs which produce vaccinia (the disease—if so it can be called—following vaccination) are the same in species as those which produce small-pox, but that during the residence of those germs in the heifer their power has undergone a certain modification which renders them innocuous, while yet they produce that particular change which results in what we call protection from small-pox. Then it would follow, as at least highly probable, that in the case of any other illness produced by living germs, we may learn how the disease-germs can be so cultivated as to lose their power for serious mischief, while retaining the power of producing protective ailment akin to the more dangerous illness produced by the unmodified germs. So that typhus, scarlet fever, diphtheria, and a host of other ailments, which are more or less certainly known to be due to the presence of living organisms in the blood or tissues, would be treated as we now treat small-pox. People inoculated with the specific "matter" for each of these diseases, once perhaps in every six or seven years, would be safe from them, or safe at any rate from severe attacks. Epidemics of such diseases would be rendered almost impossible; but when they occurred sensible people could find protection even as they now find protection from an epidemic of small-pox. Of course there would follow effects similar to those which have led many to imagine that vaccination has done more mischief than good, because so many weakly lives which would otherwise have succumbed to the unmodified disease have been saved. Just as in a race of warlike savages the type is improved by the constant weeding out of the weaker in battles and through the hardships of campaigning, so in a people exposed to many dire forms of disease the stronger only survive, and the race seems improved. But precisely as men of sense would

object to see their nation improved in physique by the thinning out resulting from constant wars, so should they advocate every method by which the action of the more fell diseases may be modified, even at the risk of the survival of many weaker members who would otherwise have been weeded out by disease.

This, then, is the promised, or rather suggested, future,—protection for those who are wise enough to accept protection, possibly even compulsory protection from those diseases which now produce so much misery and sorrow. Let us see how the matter stands, examining the evidence by experiments made on creatures of comparatively smaller worth, and, be it noted, not made on them that man alone may gain, but directly for the protection of the lower animals from disease.

Let us take first a disease which has been proved to be produced by living germs,—by creatures capable of reproducing their kind, so that once a suitable abode is found, their numbers may increase until they kill their unwilling host.

In the twenty years ending 1853, the silk culture of France had more than doubled, and there seemed every reason to believe that it would continue to increase for many years to come. The weight of the cocoons produced in 1853 amounted to no less than 52 millions of pounds. But on a sudden the aspect of affairs changed. A disease appeared which rapidly spread, and in little more than half the time during which the silk culture had doubled, it was reduced to less than the sixth part of its amount in 1853. In 1865 the cocoons only weighed eight millions of pounds. The loss in revenue, in this single year, amounted to four million pounds sterling.

The disease which had produced these disastrous results has received the name of *Pébrine*. It shows itself in the silkworm by black spots (whence the name). When it is fairly developed the worms become distorted and stunted, their movements are languid, their appetites fail them, and they die prematurely. But the disease does not necessarily become fairly developed in the worm. On the contrary, it may be only incipient during this stage of the silkworm's life. The worm may even produce a fine cocoon. Yet the disease incipient in the worm will be developed in the moth, and the eggs produced by the diseased moth will be diseased too!

It was in 1849 that the characteristic feature of the disease was first recognised. In that year Guérin Méneville noticed small vibratory bodies in the blood of silkworms. It was shown that the vibrations were not due to independent life; and the error was made of supposing that the corpuscles belonged to the blood of the worm. In reality they are capable of indefinite multiplication. They are the real germs of the disease. These living bodies "first take possession of the intestinal canal, and spread thence throughout the body of the worm. They fill the silk cavities," says Tyndall, "the stricken insect often going automatically through the motions of spinning, without any material to work

upon. Its organs, instead of being filled with the clear viscous liquid of the silk, are packed to distension by the corpuscles."

The case of the silkworms may be regarded as closely similar to that of a nation attacked by plague or pestilence. If anything, the case of the silkworms seemed even more difficult to deal with. At any rate, no plague which has fallen on man ever gave rise to so many suggestions for the remedy of the mischief. "The pharmacopœia of the silkworm," wrote M. Cornalia, in 1860, "is now as complicated as that of man. Gases, liquids, and solids have been laid under contribution. From chlorine to sulphurous acid, from nitric acid to rum, from sugar to sulphate of quinine, all has been invoked in behalf of the unhappy insect." "Pamphlets were showered upon the public," says Tyndall; "the monotony of waste paper being broken at rare intervals by a more or less useful publication." The French Minister of Agriculture signed an agreement to pay 500,000 francs for a remedy, which, though said by its inventor to be infallible, was found on trial to be useless.

It was when matters were in this state, that Pasteur was invited by Dumas, the celebrated chemist, to investigate the disease. Pasteur had never even seen a silkworm, so that it was not because of any special experience in the habits of the creature that Dumas considered him likely to achieve success where so many had failed. Yet he attached extreme importance to Pasteur's compliance with his request. "Je mets un prix extrême," wrote Dumas, "à voir votre attention fixée sur la question qui intéresse mon pauvre pays; la misère surpasse tout ce que vous pouvez imaginer." For it was in Dumas's own district that the disease prevailed most terribly.

Pasteur first studied the worm at various stages of its life. Most of our readers are doubtless aware of the nature of these stages; and doubtless many have had practical experience, as we have, of the ways of the creature as they progress. First the eggs, neatly arranged by the mother moth on some suitable surface provided by the worm-keeper, are watched until in due course comes forth a small dark worm. This grows, and as it grows casts its skin, three or four times, becoming lighter at each such moulting. After the last moulting the worm has its characteristic white colour. It continues to grow (feeding on mulberry-leaves), until, the proper time having arrived, it climbs into whatever suitable place has been provided for it (silkwormers use small brambles, but our schoolboys use little paper cups) and there spins its cocoon. When this is completed and the silk has been wound off, the chrysalis is found inside, which becomes a moth, and the moth laying her eggs, the cycle is recommenced.

It was Pasteur who showed that the disease germs might lurk in the egg, or might first appear in the worm, and in either of these stages might escape detection. But the destructive corpuscles in the blood grow with the growing worm. In the chrysalis they are larger than in the full-grown silkworm; and, finally, in the moth (assuming the germ to

have begun either in the egg or the young worm) the corpuscles are easily detected. He therefore said that the moth and not the egg should be the starting point of methods intended for the destruction of the seeds of disease. For in the egg or the young worm the germs might escape detection; in the moth, he affirmed, they could not.

When Pasteur, in September 1865, announced these views, physicists and biologists agreed in rejecting them. He was told he knew nothing about silkworms, and that his supposed discoveries were old mistakes long since shown to be such.

He answered by the simple but impressive method of prediction. Parcels of eggs, regarded by their owners as healthy, were inspected by him, the moths which had produced them being submitted to his examination. He wrote his opinion in 1866, placing it in a sealed letter, in the hands of the Mayor of St. Hippolyte. In 1867, the cultivators communicated their results. Pasteur's letter was opened, and it was found that in twelve cases his prediction was fulfilled to the letter. He had said that many of the groups would perish totally, the rest almost totally; and this happened in all except two cases, where, instead of almost total destruction, half an average crop was obtained. The owners had hatched and tended these eggs in full belief that they were healthy: Pasteur's test applied for a few minutes in 1866 would have saved them this useless labour.

Again, two parcels of eggs were submitted to Pasteur, which, after examination of the moths which had produced them, he pronounced healthy. In their case an excellent crop was produced.

Pasteur carefully investigated the development of the disease-germs. He took healthy worms by 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50, and placed matter infected with the germs on their food. "Rubbing a small diseased worm in water, he smeared the mixture," says Tyndall, "over mulberry-leaves. Assuring himself that the leaves had been eaten, he watched the consequences from day to day. Side by side with the infected worms he reared their fellows, keeping them as much as possible out of the way of infection. On April 16, 1868, he thus infected thirty worms. Up to the 23rd they remained quite well. On the 25th they seemed well, but on that day corpuscles were found in the intestines of two of them. On the 27th, or eleven days after the infected repast, two fresh worms were examined, and not only was the intestinal canal found in each case invaded, but the silk organ itself was charged with corpuscles. On the 28th the twenty-six remaining worms were covered by the black spots of pébrine. On the 30th, the difference of size between the infected and non-infected worms was very striking, the sick worms being not more than two-thirds of the bulk of the healthy ones. On May 2, a worm which had just finished its fourth moulting was examined. Its whole body was so filled with the parasite as to excite astonishment that it could live. The disease advanced, the worms died and were examined, and on May 11 only six out of the thirty remained. They were the strongest of the lot,

but on being searched they also were found charged with corpuscles. Not one of the thirty worms had escaped; a single meal had poisoned them all. The standard lot, on the contrary, spun their fine cocoons, two only of their moths being proved to contain any trace of the parasite, which had doubtless been introduced during the rearing of the worms."

He examined the progress of infection still more carefully, counting the number of corpuscles, which, as the disease increased, rose from 0 to 10, to 100, and even to 1,000 or 1,500, in the field of view of his microscope. He also tried different modes of infection. "He proved that worms inoculate each other by the infliction of visible wounds with their claws." He showed that by the simple association of diseased with healthy worms the infection spread. He demonstrated in fine that "it was no hypothetical infected medium—no problematical pythogenic gas—that killed the worms, but a definite organism."

Thus did Pasteur teach the worm-cultivator how to extinguish the pestilence which had destroyed his egg crops. The plans for extirpating the diseased worms had failed before his researches, for the very sufficient reason that no sufficient means had been devised for distinguishing the diseased from the healthy. As Pasteur himself stated the matter,—
"the most skilful cultivator, even the most expert microscopist, placed in presence of large cultivations which present the symptoms described in my experiments, will necessarily arrive at an erroneous conclusion if he confines himself to the knowledge which preceded my researches. The worms will not present to him the slightest spot of pébrine; the microscope will not reveal the existence of corpuscles; the mortality of the worms will be null or insignificant; and the cocoons leave nothing to be desired. Our observer would, therefore, conclude without hesitation that the eggs produced will be good for incubation. The truth is, on the contrary, that all the worms of these fine crops have been poisoned; that from the beginning they carried in them the germ of the malady, ready to multiply itself beyond measure in the chrysalides and the moths, thence to pass into the eggs and smite with sterility the next generation. And what is the first cause of the evil concealed under so deceitful an exterior? In our experiments we can, so to speak, touch it with our fingers. It is entirely the effect of a single corpusculous repast; an effect more or less prompt according to the epoch of life of the worm that has eaten the poisoned food."

His plans for the elimination of diseased worms, and for the isolation of the healthy from contagion in any possible form, met with full success. The disease has not been eradicated, because the silk-producing districts cannot be completely isolated; but its ravages have been so far reduced that the cultivation of silk promises soon to reach something like the position which had been hoped for before the disease had shown itself.

Now between the ideas which had prevailed respecting pébrine before Pasteur's researches, and those which still prevail respecting many con-

tagious diseases, there is a striking analogy. Just as Pasteur was assured by many experienced silk-growers that the disease was due to some deleterious medium, rendered more or less poisonous at different times by some mysterious influence, so epidemic diseases, we are assured by many experienced medical men, are due to occult influences arising spontaneously in foul air. It matters not that as certainly as an animal produces creatures of its own kind, and not of some other kind, so the poison of one fever produces always that fever, and not some other fever. In this they find no evidence of anything akin to what Dr. Budd has called parentage. The followers of Pasteur in the silk districts, and those who have benefited by others of his researches, presently to be described, would as soon believe in the spontaneous generation of pébrine and kindred diseases, as in the spontaneous generation of cats and dogs. But many still believe respecting diseases affecting the human race in which precisely the same phenomena of reproduction are presented, that they arise from some spontaneous fermentation (unlike every form of fermentation on which experiments have yet been made).

But before we pass to consider other and even more decisive evidence, we may note that, so far as the researches of Pasteur on pébrine are concerned, we have not yet seen the way to any means of safety from the contagious diseases which affect human beings. We cannot kill all diseased persons in order that we may get rid of the disease-germs within them.

Even more remarkable than his investigation of the silkworm disease was Pasteur's investigation of the disease known as splenic fever, which affects horses, cattle, and sheep on the continent. In the rapidity of its action this disease (known also as "anthrax," and "charbon") resembles the black plague. In bad cases death ensues in the course of twenty-four hours. In less severe cases the creature attacked suffers greatly, and retains the traces of the attack during the rest of its life. It is stated that between the years 1867 and 1870 no less than 56,000 deaths occurred among horses, cattle, and sheep in the district of Novgorod, in Russia, while 568 human beings perished, to whom the disease had been somehow communicated. In France the disease is very prevalent, and many proprietors have been ruined by the entire destruction of their flocks and herds. It is said that a malady which occurs among the woolsorters at Bradford (often proving fatal) is a modification of anthrax communicated by the wool of sheep which have suffered from splenic fever.

In 1850 MM. Rayer and Devaine discovered minute transparent rodlike bodies in the blood of animals which had suffered from this disease. Koch, a German physician, then scarcely known, showed that these objects are of a fungoid nature, and traced the various stages of their existence. Cohn obtained similar results, as did Ewart in England. The growth of the disease-producing rods, as studied under microscopic examination, is as follows:—First, germs of extreme minuteness are seen

in the form of simple tubes with transverse divisions; next, minute dots appear, which enlarge into egg-shaped bodies lying in rows within the tubes; lastly, the rods break up, freeing the ovoid germs. It has been shown that "the minutest drop of the fluid containing these germs, if conveyed into another portion of cultivated fluid, initiates the same process of growth and reproduction; and this may be repeated many times without any impairment of the potency of the germs, which, when introduced by inoculation into the bodies of rabbits, guinea-pigs, and mice, develop in them all the characteristic phenomena of splenic fever. Koch further ascertained," continues Dr. Carpenter, from whom the above passage is quoted, "that the blood of animals that succumbed to this disease might be dried and kept for four years, and might even be pulverized into dust, without losing its power of infection."

Pasteur's first steps in inquiring into this disease were characterised by the same keenness of judgment which he displayed in investigating *pébrine*. He ascertained that "charbon" would often appear in its most malignant form among sheep feeding in seemingly healthy pastures, where there were no known causes of infection. He found on inquiry that animals which years before had died in those regions, had been buried ten or twelve feet below the surface, so that it seemed obvious they could have had nothing to do with the reappearance of the malady. But in inquiries such as these, Pasteur has taught us that what obviously *cannot be* has an unfortunately perplexing fashion of turning out to be precisely what *is*. He quickly became persuaded that in some way the germs of disease supposed to be buried out of the way three or four yards beneath the soil reached the surface and originated fresh attacks of the "charbon" pestilence. He found in earth-worms—those creatures which Darwin has recently shown to be such important workers in the earth's crust—the cause of the trouble. He was ridiculed, of course. But he has a troublesome way of turning ridicule upon those who laugh at him. Collecting worms from pastures where the disease had reappeared, "he made an extract of the contents of their alimentary canals, and found that the inoculation of rabbits and guinea-pigs with this extract gave them the severest form of 'charbon,' due to the multiplication in their circulating current of the deadly anthrax-bacillus" (this is the pleasing way science has of describing the disease germs), "with which their blood was found after death to be loaded."

Our countryman, Professor Brown Sanderson, discovered another way in which "anthrax" has been communicated. He found that herds affected with it had been fed with brewers' grains supplied from a common source, "and on examining microscopically a sample of these grains, they were seen to be swarming with the deadly bacillus, which, when once it has found its way among them, grows and multiplies with extraordinary rapidity."

But now comes the point which renders this inquiry important to ourselves. The poison germs are small, visible only in the microscope,

but they are fungoid, and the laws of their growth and development are as determinable (with suitable care) as the laws of the growth and development of the monarchs of a forest. Now whatever lives and grows and produces creatures after its own kind, whether animal or vegetable, can be cultivated. With due care and watchfulness it may be altered in type and character, just as the wild plants of the hedgerow may be altered into plants producing the flowers and fruits of our gardens and hothouses. The methods of cultivation are not precisely the same, because as yet microscopists do not know how to select the less from the more destructive germs, so as to propagate from the former only. But, as Dr. Carpenter puts the matter, two modes of "culture" suggest themselves: first, "the introduction of the germs into the circulating current of animals of a different type, and its repeated transfusion from one animal into another;" and secondly, "cultivation carried on out of the living body, in fluids (such as blood-serum or meat juice) which are found favourable to its growth, the temperature of the fluid, in the latter case, being kept up nearly to blood-heat. Both these methods have been used by Pasteur himself and by Professor Burdon Sanderson; and the latter especially by M. Toussaint of Toulouse, who, as well as Pasteur, has experimented also on another bacillus which he had found to be the disease-germ of a malady termed 'fowl cholera,' which proves fatal among poultry in France and Switzerland. It has been by Pasteur that the conditions of the mitigation of the poison by culture have been most completely determined; so that the disease produced by the inoculation of his 'cultivated' virus may be rendered so trivial as to be scarcely worth notice. His method consists in cultivating the bacillus in meat-juice or chicken-broth, to which access of air is permitted while dust is excluded; and then allowing a certain time to elapse before it is made use of in inoculation experiments. If the period does not exceed two months the potency of the bacillus is little diminished; but if the interval be extended to three or four months, it is found that though animals inoculated with the organism take the disease, they have it in a milder form, and a considerable proportion recover; whilst if the time be still further prolonged, say to eight months, the disease produced by it is so mild as not to be at all serious, the inoculated animals speedily regaining perfect health and vigour."

Now, if we consider what has been done in this case we shall recognise the probability, if not the absolute promise, of protection being obtained against some of the most terrible of the diseases which affect the human race. We see that in some cases, at any rate, the germs of a deadly disease may be so "cultivated" that the disease, though communicable by the altered germs, is no longer fatal. Now we know that the milder attacks of scarlet fever, measles, whooping-cough, diphtheria, and other such diseases, produce as completely protective a change in the constitution of the patient as the severest forms short of absolutely fatal attacks. We see, then, that even had no experiments been made-

to determine whether the disease communicated by cultivated germs is protective, there would be good reason to believe that it is so.

But such experiments have been made. What Pasteur calls the "vaccination" for the "anthrax" disease has been shown by repeated experiments to be absolutely protective. Prof. Greenfield has vaccinated cattle from rodents (gnawing animals like rats, squirrels, &c.) with the "anthrax disease," and has found that they remain free from all disorder, local or constitutional. The same result has attended M. Toussaint's experiments with the bacillus "cultivated" in special fluids, not in the living body of any creature: sheep and dogs inoculated with this cultivated poison showing no form of the deadly "anthrax" disease.

The experiment was conducted on a large scale under the auspices of the provincial agricultural societies of France. A flock of fifty sheep was placed at M. Pasteur's disposal. Of these he vaccinated twenty-five with the cultivated "anthrax" poison on May 3, 1881, repeating the operation a fortnight later. All the animals thus treated passed through a slight illness, but at the end of the month were as well as their fellows, the twenty-five which had not been vaccinated. On May 31, all the fifty were inoculated with the strongest anthrax poison "M. Pasteur predicted that on the following day the twenty-five which were inoculated for the first time would all be dead, whilst those protected by previous 'vaccination' with the mild virus would be perfectly free from even mild indisposition. A large assemblage of agricultural authorities, cavalry officers, and veterinary surgeons met on the field the next afternoon to learn the result. At two o'clock twenty-three of the unprotected sheep were dead; the twenty-fourth died an hour later, and the twenty-fifth at four. But the twenty-five 'vaccinated' sheep were all in perfectly good condition; one of them, which had been designedly inoculated with an extra dose of the poison, having been slightly indisposed for a few hours, but having then recovered."

These experiments are important in themselves. The French owners of flocks and herds have now an infallible protection against the deadly "charbon" poison, which had caused serious loss to nearly all of them, and ruinous loss to not a few. But such experiments are infinitely more important in what they promise. If the law which they seem to indicate is general, if every kind of disease-germ can be "cultivated" so as to be deprived of its malignancy, but not of its protective agency, then we may hope to see cholera, diphtheria, measles, scarlatina, and other diseases brought as thoroughly under control as one which formerly was the most deadly of them all—small-pox.

Let us here pause for a moment to consider some inquiries which have been made by two American doctors, H. C. Wood and Formad, under the direction of the American National Board of Health, into the nature of the poison which is active in diphtheritic epidemics. Read in the light of what Pasteur, Toussaint, and Greenfield have done with diseases affecting the lower animals, the inquiries of Drs. Wood and

Formad are full of promise that before long complete protection will be found against the fatal disease, diphtheria.

They had shown long ago that shreds of diphtheritic membrane, taken from the throats of human patients and used for the inoculation of rabbits, produced tubercular disease, and also that the false membrane supposed to be characteristic of diphtheria appears as a result of severe inflammation of the trachea, however produced. But now they have found that in every case of true diphtheria the membranes are loaded with minute organisms, micrococci, while the blood and the internal organs of patients dying from the disease are similarly infected. They have ascertained also how these micrococci destroy life. They attack the white corpuscles, or leucocytes in the blood. These lose their form, and eventually burst, giving exit to an irregular transparent mass packed with micrococci. Hence a new and multiplied crop of blood foes, and, with the increased destruction of the white corpuscles of the blood, the destruction of the person in whose veins the contaminated blood flows. They showed also that the disease can readily be communicated artificially from animal to animal. Another fact detected by Drs. Wood and Formad is of extreme importance, as showing how epidemics of diphtheria may be brought about as a development of the malignancy of sore throats not hitherto regarded as akin to diphtheria. They showed that in ordinary sore throat as well as in the diphtheritic sore throat the micrococci are present, differing only in development and activity. In other words, diphtheria may be regarded as due to naturally cultivated micrococci, the cultivation being of such a kind as to increase their destructiveness.

Some experiments by Pasteur illustrate the kind of cultivation just mentioned. "It is not a little curious," writes Dr. Carpenter, "that, as culture of one kind can mitigate the action of the poison germs, so culture of another kind may restore or even increase their original potency. It has been found by Pasteur"—in the case of the "anthrax" or "charbon" poison—"that this may be effected by inoculating with the mitigated virus a new-born guinea-pig, to which it will prove fatal; then using its blood for the inoculation of a somewhat older animal; and repeating this process several times. In this way a most powerful virus may be obtained at will." "This discovery," proceeds Dr. Carpenter, "is not only practically available for experimental purposes, but of great scientific interest, as throwing light upon the way in which mild types of other diseases may be converted into malignant." Dr. Grawitz has, indeed, recently asserted that even some of the most innocent of our domestic forms of disease-germs may be changed by artificial culture into disease-germs of the most destructive nature.

Of the importance of such researches as those made by Wood and Formad, some conception may be formed when we note that the deaths from diphtheria in England and Wales during the last ten years have amounted to nearly 30,000, or to more than half as many again as have been caused by small-pox.

We have seen that in diseases known to be due to living germs, the circumstances under which propagation of the disease takes place are precisely those which medical science recognises in the propagation of small-pox, measles, scarlet fever, and other so-called zymotic diseases. We have seen further that a modified form of "anthrax" (as of "fowl-cholera") can be produced which, while by no means destructive of life, exerts a perfectly protective influence. We should be justified in inferring that the protective influence of vaccination is similar in character, were it not that in such matters science requires proof, not surmise, or even highly probable inference. For, as we have seen, one disease can no more be produced by the germs of another disease than cats from dogs (to use an apt illustration of Miss Nightingale's); nor can one disease, so far as any experiments yet made seem to show, exert a protective influence against another entirely distinct. If this last rule were absolutely certain, instead of being but exceedingly probable, we might at once argue that the germs which produce vaccinia (the disturbance following vaccination) are simply the germs of small-pox "cultivated" by residing for a while in the blood of the heifer. For vaccination exerts a protective influence against small-pox, and, if such influence can only be exerted by the small-pox disease germs, it follows that the disease-germs in the case of vaccination are the same in kind as those to which small-pox is due, differing only in the energy with which they attack the springs of life.

But science is not content to take such matters for granted. The relationship between small-pox and vaccination has been definitely put to the test. Unfortunately the results hitherto obtained have not been in satisfactory agreement. Dr. Thiele of Kasan, forty years ago, repeatedly succeeded (according to a report issued under Government authority) in producing genuine vaccination by inoculating heifers with small-pox poison; and having done this he used this artificial vaccine matter in vaccinating human beings, "its protective power being found fully equal to that of the natural vaccinia." But not only so—at that comparatively remote date, Dr. Thiele unconsciously cultivated the small-pox poison germs after the second manner described above. According to his own account, and his own erroneous idea as to the meaning of what resulted, he diluted the small-pox poison with warm milk, or, as Pasteur would say, he cultivated the living germs in warm milk; and, with the poison thus modified, he produced vaccinia, without passing the small-pox poison through the blood of the cow at all. Now this was thought so unlikely to be true, in those days, that Dr. Thiele's other statements were by many physicians discredited, and this particular result was simply ignored by subsequent workers. But now, at any rate, the very improbability of what he achieved, according to the views prevalent in his day, should cause us to regard with all the more confidence his account of his experiments. For no man, still less a skilful physician as Dr. Thiele undoubtedly was, would invent experiments with improbable results. If he invented at all he would at any rate invent what

seemed likely to be true, especially if the experiments were such as could be very readily repeated. In our own time this particular experiment might be invented by a dishonest person, the result being altogether likely to be right: others might be left to make the experiments and the *crédit* claimed by him who asserted that he had made them himself. But in Thiele's time it was very unlikely that this would be done. It seems, therefore, exceedingly probable, so far as his account is concerned, that in the first place a modified form of the true small-pox poison is communicated in vaccination, and in the second, that a suitably modified form can be obtained without the use of the cow at all, by simply cultivating the small-pox disease-germs in warm milk.

But simultaneously with Dr. Thiele's researches others were made in this country by Mr. Ceely, of Aylesbury, which led to results not exactly contrary to those by Dr. Thiele, but which were certainly less satisfactory. He was able to produce an eruption in cows inoculated with small-pox virus, and the disease was transmissible to the human subject; but it resembled small-pox rather than vaccinia, and its transmission by inoculation did not produce what the best judges considered as genuine cowpock. It was allowed to die out.

We may suggest in passing, as a possible cause of the difference thus observed between Ceely's and Thiele's results, some difference in the length of time allowed to elapse after the small-pox virus was transmitted to the cow. It may be necessary, in making such experiments, to recall Pasteur's experiments with "fowl-cholera," when it was found that the potency of the bacillus was only sufficiently reduced after the lapse of a considerable time.

On the contrary the experiments made a few years later than Ceely's by Mr. Badcock, of Brighton, were similar in their results to those made by Dr. Thiele. Dr. Carpenter, who has been able to examine the record kept by Mr. Badcock's son, states that Mr. Badcock "inoculated his cows with small-pox virus furnished to him from an unquestionable source, and that this inoculation produced vesicles which were pronounced by some of the best practitioners of Brighton to have the characters of genuine vaccinia, while the lymph drawn from these vesicles, and introduced by inoculation into the arms of children, produced in them vaccine vesicles of the true Jennerian type. "Free exposure of some of these children to small-pox infection," adds Dr. Carpenter, "showed them to have acquired a complete protection, and the new stock of vaccine has been extensively diffused through the country, and has been fully approved by the best judges of true vaccinia both in London and the provinces. Mr. Simon, writing in 1857, stated that from the new stock thus obtained by Mr. Badcock (not only once but repeatedly), more than 14,000 persons had been vaccinated by Mr. Badcock himself, and that he had furnished supplies of his lymph to more than 4,000 medical practitioners. And I learn from Mr. Badcock, jun., who is now a public vaccinator at Brighton, that this stock is still in use in that town and neighbourhood."

These results seem decisive. But against them we must set the failures of attempts made by Professors Chauveau and Burdon Sanderson, by Belgian physicians who have recently conducted experiments in this direction, and the earlier experiments of Coely. But as Dr. Carpenter well remarks, failures cannot be regarded as negating the absolute and complete successes obtained by Thiele and Badcock. We can perhaps learn from a careful study of the failures the conditions on which success and failure may depend. But a single success is absolutely decisive; because, as we have seen, persons inoculated with the poison germs obtained from the cows experimented on by Thiele and Badcock were found to be fully protected against the deadly small-pox poison—a result which there can be no mistaking.

It is gratifying to know that neither Chauveau nor Burdon Sanderson consider their failure as negating decisively the results obtained by Thiele and Badcock. A reinvestigation of the matter is to be carried on before long, and as Mr. Badcock, sen., himself is able and willing to give all necessary information as to the way in which his researches were carried on, there is every prospect that the secret of success in such researches will be discovered. We venture to predict with considerable confidence that the new researches will unmistakeably confirm those of Badcock and Thiele.

In the meantime let us note some experiments which are full of promise in another direction.

Anti-vaccinationists, not concerned by the terrible mischief which has followed the attempts of their followers to escape vaccination, continue their outcry against what they call legalised poisoning, and often with success, especially in America, where there is no settled system of compulsory vaccination. But, when there are outbreaks of malignant small-pox, those who have seemed to agree with the anti-vaccinationists are found singularly ready to seek the protection which vaccination affords; and in America they are not only willing to be vaccinated themselves in such cases, but eager to pass municipal enactments for compulsory vaccination. It seems, however, that even independently of the vaccination of the healthy, there is a resource by which safety can be secured in cases of epidemic small-pox, and the disease quickly stamped out. The importance of this will be recognised when we consider the probability that protective means will before long be found in the case of other diseases, and the extreme unlikelihood that (for many years to come) all adults would consent, except perhaps in times of epidemics, to be inoculated with the specific poisons of other diseases than small-pox.

Dr. Payne, late Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine in the Southern Medical College, Atlanta, noticed, as far back as 1846, when at the Small-pox Hospital in New York, that the initial fever of small-pox can be detected by the pulse for some time before any other symptom appears. The pulse is peculiar, and difficult to describe; "but recognisable by any physician who will patiently and carefully investigate

the subject until his finger becomes educated." "When once recognised," says Professor Payne, "it can *never* be forgotten, any more than the peculiar thrill imparted to the finger by the pulse of a patient who has lost large quantities of blood by hæmorrhage can be forgotten by a physician who has once learned to detect it."

Now Dr. Payne, whenever he recognises the initial fever in this way, at once vaccinates the patient. If this is done within ten or twelve hours after the initial fever of small-pox has set in, the patient will have but a slight illness, will show no trace of eruption, and will be thenceforth as perfectly safe from a recurrence of the disease as if he had had small-pox in its most malignant form. A still more remarkable feature of the case is this, that if the patient is vaccinated after the initial fever sets in, he can go about where he pleases without any fear of imparting the disease to others. The ingrafting of the vaccine matter upon the primary small-pox fever seems to destroy its ability of reproduction or propagation entirely. (Here, of course, it is to be noted, that its power of reproduction by actual revaccination remains, but that its power of reproduction in the ordinary way in which small-pox spreads is destroyed, just as in vaccination.) "Another peculiarity," says Dr. Payne, "is this; if an unprotected patient is vaccinated before the beginning of the fever, and the vaccine takes, but does not prevent, only modifies the disease, the eruption will be like that of variola in its appearance and characteristics. But if vaccinated after the commencement of the initial fever, and too late to entirely prevent an eruption, the eruption will resemble in size and character the small-pox eruption. There is," he adds, "as great a difference in the appearance of the varioloid and small-pox eruption as there is between grey and yellow."

Dr. Payne relates a very interesting case illustrating his method of dealing with cases of small-pox, first where the patient had not been vaccinated in good time, and later with those who showed signs of the initial fever. In 1873 an epidemic of small-pox broke out in Virginia, the small-pox being of the variety known as *variola nigra*, and when not modified by some benign influence was invariably confluent. Both in and around Manassas the cases were of the same kind. Being called on to attend a coloured servant-girl, who was ill in a room over the kitchen of a large hotel near his own dwelling, he recognised in her the pulse peculiar to small-pox, and next day the eruption appeared. "I saw," he says, "it would never do to remove this woman, and I determined to isolate the case, and abide the consequences, be they what they might. If I have her removed the poor woman will die, and the prevailing winds will blow the poison for miles down the valley below, and the disease will spread beyond control. But should she die (of which there is strong probability) my plans will be defeated. Firm in faith of the greatest good to the greatest number, I said to myself, 'If she dies, I will wrap her from her toes to the crown of her head in double linen, and with the aid of some one who has had the small-pox, I will bury

her.' " Luckily she recovered. " Three persons who were in the room at the time were ordered to report to the Doctor twice daily. One showed the peculiar pulse on the 24th ; he was then vaccinated, and after being indisposed for two days (but without eruption) recovered. The others, who had been vaccinated before, did not take it.

In one case, a family of eight persons, " poor and shiftless coloured people," occupied a house in which there was only one room, and where good air and cleanliness were impossible. The father suffered from a very malignant attack of varioloid and was terribly scarred, but the rest of the family, none of whom had ever been vaccinated before, were vaccinated after the initial fever began, and escaped with slight attacks. In another case, where a whole family were exposed to the infection, he vaccinated the father and two sisters, but an old aunt who had not been vaccinated for many years, refused to be vaccinated, being attacked by varioloid. The day after vaccinating the father and sisters, a brother who had returned showed the peculiar pulse. Dr. Payne vaccinated him at once, and the next day his arm looked as if he had been vaccinated eight days before ; it rapidly became sore ; he was indisposed for two or three days, and recovered without a single sign of eruption. These cases are taken from a report of Dr. Payne's experiments in the *Scientific American*. Dr. Payne's plan has been tried in more than a hundred cases, extending over a period of thirty-four years, without a single failure.

Supposing that what has been shown to be true of small-pox is true also of other malignant diseases, a haven of safety is in view, though it may be that some time must elapse before it can be reached. The germ peculiar to each disease has to be made the subject of special study. The proper habitat for such "cultivation" as shall result in mitigating the virulence of its action has to be determined, and the degree of protective power remaining after cultivation has to be ascertained. Next the indications of the initial stage of each form of disease have to be recognised,* and the effects of inoculation with the mitigated disease determined. When this has been done (always on the assumption we have made that what seems most probably true is really so), "plague and pestilence" will no longer be feared as they now are. Isolation of those first attacked from the rest will go a great way to diminish the risk of the infection spreading. A careful watch for the signs of the initial fever among those exposed to infection will do the rest, if due measures are taken in every case when the initial fever shows itself.

And as the inquiries of Pasteur and his fellow-workers seem thus to indicate a haven of safety, so also do they show the presence of concealed rocks, of dangers heretofore unnoticed. What Pasteur showed respect-

* It may well be that in many cases, instead of the comparatively rough test of feeling the pulse, the use of the sphygmograph, or some other instrument for determining minute changes in the character of the pulse, may be required.

ing the deadly "anthrax" has its analogue, we may be sure, in diseases affecting the human race. Dangers lurk where none would suspect them, and where only the keen eyes of the trained science-worker can find them. The poison-germ may attack through the alimentary canal in the food we eat, through the lungs in the air we breathe, as well as directly through the blood-current. Disease and death may lurk in a dress, a child's toy, a lock of hair, a letter, or a carpet. Neither time nor distance avails to destroy the fatal infection.

We may note lastly a point to which attention has been directed by Dr. Andrew Wilson, in *Knowledge*, that the practical and actual benefits which have flowed to human health, and which are likely to flow in the future as well—"the saving of life by the prevention and extermination of disease"—have arisen from a simple study in natural history. So-called practical minds are often given to loudly express their disapproval of any science which deals with what to them seem mere abstractions. Doubtless to such minds the study of the development of the "rods" of splenic fever, under a watch-glass must seem a piece of scientific *dilettantism*, just as information respecting the solar system may seem despicable enough, because its results cannot be measured by a profitable currency, or, in plain language, because it does not seem to pay. The best answer to such reasoning is found in the recital of the results to human and animal life, to which studies in an apparently unimportant field of research in natural history have led and seem likely to lead mankind.

R. A. P.

Har-Connaught: a Sketch.

THE most salient features of a region are not always its most characteristic ones, those which a longer and a better acquaintanceship stamps upon our memories as final. Roughly speaking, all acquaintanceship with scenery may be said to come under one or other of two heads: to be either extrinsic or intrinsic—the point of view, namely, of the man that looks at it from the inside, or of the man that looks at it from the outside; in other words, that of the tourist and that of the native. With the former everything, or nearly everything, depends upon first impressions. Should things go ill then for him, that scenery is destined ever after to remain blotted with the mists that enshrouded it during his visit, or, worse still, envired with the discomforts endured at that diabolical inn, whose evil memory stands out as the most prominent fact of his travels. He is also (unless possessed of unusual strength of mind) much at the mercy of his guide-book; still more perhaps—at all events in Ireland—at that of his local Jehu. Pursued with the terror of not seeing everything, he as a consequence sees little, and that little unsatisfactorily. The native, on the other hand, is troubled with none of these things. He keeps to his own ground, and he knows it well; its roads, lanes, fields, ditches, dykes—probably its sheep, cows, and pigs. Here, however, as a rule, he stops. Beyond his own parish, or his own boundary, he knows and professes to know nothing. Why should he? He is not a tourist nor yet a land surveyor; why should he trouble himself, therefore, to go poking about over mountains and moors, especially out of the shooting season? Now and then, however, one happens to come across a being who does not fall strictly speaking into either one or other of these categories; who is not tied by the ties and shackled by the shackles of the resident, and who, on the other hand, does not believe in the possibility of exploring an entire tract of country, and plucking out the whole heart of its mystery within a space of twenty-four hours; who has a prejudice, too, in favour of forming his own views unbiassed by the views of his predecessors. Now if in this particular region named in my heading I were happy enough to find myself in the company of such a discriminating traveller as this, what course should I suggest his pursuing in order as quickly as may be to come at the main facts and features of its topography? All things considered, I should suggest his first and foremost clambering up to the top of one of the neighbouring mountains—there are no lack, fortunately, to choose from—and there, having first seated himself as comfortably as may be upon an obliging boulder, to proceed leisurely to

spell at the main features of the scene below, so as to secure some general notion of its character previous to studying it in greater detail. Before doing this it may be as well for me to state, however, a little more definitely what and where this same region of Iar-Connaught is, since, beyond a general impression that it is somewhere or other in Ireland, it is by no means impossible that some of my readers may be completely at sea as to its whereabouts. Iar, or West Connaught, then, is, or rather was, the original name for the whole of the region now known to the tourist as Connemara, with the addition of a further strip of country stretching eastward as far as the town of Galway. This latter and more familiar name would seem to have crept gradually into use, and its limits consequently to have never been very accurately defined. In the generality of maps and guide-books it will be found to begin at a line drawn from somewhere about the south-east side of Kilkieran Bay to the upper end of Lough Corrib—a wholly imaginary line where no boundary whatsoever exists; west of this line being called Connemara, while the name of Iar or West-Connaught is usually, though obviously improperly, assigned to the remaining or south-eastern portion. Any one who will glance at the map of Ireland will see the natural boundaries of the region at a glance. A great lake—the second or third largest in the kingdom—extends nearly due north and south, cutting the county of Galway into an eastward and a westward portion. This lake is only separated from the sea by a narrow neck of land barely four miles wide, which neck of land is again divided into east and west by the salmon river—dear to all fishermen—which falls into the sea just below the town. Between this and the Atlantic the whole region to the westward is more or less mountainous ground, some of the highest summits in Ireland falling within its area; while, on the other side, no sooner do we leave the coast than we get upon that broad limestone plain which occupies the whole centre of Ireland. Taking all this into consideration, it will, I think, be admitted that the original boundaries are as good as need be, and that whether we call the region Iar-Connaught or Connemara, it is better to abide by them than by the newer and more obviously arbitrary ones. North, again, the boundary of our region coincides pretty closely with those of the counties Mayo and Galway; and here, too, what we may call the natural frontier is very sharply and clearly defined; the Killary Bay stretching its long arm some ten miles or so inland, while from the other side a long loop or “coose” at the southern extremity of Lough Mask stretches seaward in friendly fashion to meet it; the intermediate space being occupied by the Lake Nafcoey, and the various streams, small and big, which flow in and out of it. North of this, again, we have two more mountain ranges: the Fornamore, which, with Slieve Partry and the hill called the Devil’s Mother, forms a single continuous train of summits; while to the west, on the further side of the Killary Bay, rise the great mountain-mass of Mweelrea and its two brother peaks; the whole constituting a sort of

fraternity or community of mountains, separated by the sea or intervening plains from every other.

And now to return to our much-enduring traveller, who has been left "poised in mid-air upon the giddy top" of one of the Bennabeolas (commonly known as the Twelve Pins), and whose patience will probably be at an end before he has begun even to acquire his lesson.

The first thing certain, I think, to strike anyone who attains to at all an extended view over Iar-Connaught is the extraordinary extent to which land and water have here invaded, or rather, so to speak, interpenetrated, one another. To a more or less extent this of course is characteristic of all rugged coasts, but here it would really seem as if the process must have attained its maximum. Looking out from our eyrie over the surrounding country, the general effect is as though the sky had been dropping lakes upon the land, and the land in return had been showering rocks upon the sea. Westward, where the two great headlands of Angrus and Slyne Head jut into the sea, we see, between their outstretched points, and to right and left of them, and far out over the sea in every direction, an infinite multitude of island points, dark above, gleaming and glittering below, where the sun catches upon their wave-washed sides. Some of these islands are gathered together into clusters; others are single or in scattered groups. Round islands, long islands, oblong islands; islands of every shape and size, from the tiny illauns and carrigeens, which barely afford a foothold to the passing gull, up to the respectable-sized islands of Inishbofin and Inishturk, which boast their populations of five and six hundred inhabitants apiece, and carry on, or did until lately carry on, a considerable traffic in kelp, receiving in return poteen and such other necessities of life as are not as yet grown upon the islands. Now if, turning our eyes away from the sea, we look inland, we shall see that the same sort of general effect presents itself, only that here the elements are reversed. Here the sea has everywhere invaded and taken possession of the land. Try to follow one of its glittering arms to its end, and when you think you have seen the last of it, lo! it reappears on the other side of some small summit, winding away in intricate curves and convolutions far as the eye can see. As for the lakes, they are endless, bewildering, past all power of man to count or to remember. With all the Celt's talent for bestowing appropriate names upon the objects with which he finds himself surrounded, here nature has been too many for him, a large proportion of these lakes having, so far as I am aware, received no names at all. Indeed, even to know them apart is quite sufficiently perplexing. Lough Inagh and Derryclare, perhaps, with their wooded islands; Balinahiach, with its castle and its salmon streams; Kylemore Lake in its wooded glen, and Lough Muck and Lough Fee, filling up the deep gorge which stretches seaward between two steep cliffs; these, and perhaps some dozen or so more, we may distinguish readily enough; but who will undertake to give an account of the countless multitude of loughs and

longheens, drift-basins, bog-basins, and rock-basins, which stud the whole face of the country between Lough Corrib and the sea? Look at the low ground south of Clifden and between us and Slyne Head! You might compare it with a looking-glass starred with cracks, or to a net, of which the strands stood for the ground, and the intermediate spaces for the water! Many, too, of these lakes lie far away out of every one's reach, and are never seen at all, or only once a year, perhaps, by some turf-cutter, on his way to a distant bog, or some sportsman taking a fresh cast in hopes of coming upon that pack of grouse someone is reported to have seen in this direction. Others, again, lie high up upon the mountain sides, often close to the very summit, where they are still less likely to be seen, though any one who will take the trouble of clambering up in search of them will find that few things are more beautiful in their way than these little desolate tarns, set about with huge rocks, yet so clear that every modulation of the skies may be seen reflected on their surface. Most striking of these, perhaps, are the so-called "corries"—bowl-shaped hollows, usually flat-bottomed, and cut out of the solid rock. Often a whole series of these may be seen lying parallel to one another upon the vertical sides of precipices; the effect from below being very much as if so many mouthfuls had been bitten out of the cliff. Some of these corries contain water; others again are dry. When full they are usually partly formed of drift, which, accumulating at the mouth of the hollow, hinders the water from escaping. As to their origin, geologists differ not a little, some maintaining that they are due to direct ice action, and chiefly for the following reasons: first, that they differ entirely from hollows made by any other agencies; secondly, that nothing in the least resembling them is now being formed by the sea; and, thirdly, that they cannot possibly be due to the ordinary meteoric agents—rain, snow, wind, running water, &c.—since these very agents are at present busily engaged in smoothing them away. Others, equally entitled to our confidence, maintain, first, that other agents besides ice are perfectly capable of making similar hollows; secondly, that the sea is at this very moment engaged in scooping out small coves and cooses, which, if raised in a general elevation of the land, would in time present an appearance very similar to these hill corries, such as we now see them; and thirdly, that the original cause, or at any rate the chief agent, must have been, not ice, but faults and dislocations in the rock, aided subsequently by glacial or marine action. Where experts differ to such an extent, how, it may be asked, is the humble inquirer to steer his modest course?

But we are not dependent upon rock corries for our evidence of ice action in this neighbourhood; we meet it in ten thousand different forms. In fact there is probably no district in Great Britain where its sign-manual has been written in plainer or more legible characters. In this respect our Bannabeola range is of special interest, as from it, rather

than from either of the neighbouring and rival ranges, is held to have spread that great ice-sheet whose effects are so plainly visible upon every scratched stone and crag-rounded hill-side within an area of sixty miles. Why it *should* have spread here is, however, at first by no means obvious. On the contrary, it would at first sight seem more likely that from the higher and on the whole bulkier mass of Mweelrea and its brother peaks would have come that impetus which has thus stamped itself upon all the country round. But no—they have been swept across by ice coming from this direction. This has been very well and clearly shown in an admirable little memoir on the subject published some years since by Messrs. Close and Kinahan.* “The ice stream,” say these authors, “has passed on and moved, not only against Croagh Patrick, but farther northward against the range of the Erris and Tyrawley mountains. Although partly forced out of its way by them, it has nevertheless streamed across them—certainly through their passes, e.g. that of Coolnabinnia on the west side of Nephin (as shown by the striations on the summit of Tristia, nearly 1,100 feet above the sea), that of Lough Feeagh (witness the striations on the side of Buckoogh at 1,200 feet), and that of Ballacragher Bay near Molranny (as evidenced by the striations in Corraun Achill on the north-west side of Clew Bay); in all these cases the movement of the red sandstone blocks corroborates the evidence of the striations.”

As to the further question of why this and not the Mweelrea range should have been selected for the honour of being the local “birthplace of glaciers,” that is believed to be due, partly to the fact that, though less high, these Bennabeolas form on the whole a more compact mass than the Mayo group; but still more to the circumstance of the latter having been robbed of their full share of snow by the former, which, stretching further to the south-west, then as now were the first to intercept the moisture-laden winds of the Atlantic. Instead, however, of curdling into cloud and discharging themselves in sheets of rain as they do at present, their burden was then flung down in the form of snow, which, hardening and consolidating into ice, rapidly accumulated in the valleys, heaped itself up over every hillside, in many instances burying the very summits themselves under what was practically a huge superimposed mountain of solid ice.

Though often spoken of as a glacier, this, it must always be remembered, is not what in Switzerland and elsewhere is understood by a glacier at all. In picturing to ourselves the state of things which must once have existed in these islands, we are too apt to draw all our ideas and illustrations from these Swiss Alps—the only perpetually snow-clad region with which most of us have any practical acquaintance. Now nothing can be more misleading. In Switzerland the glaciers only exist down to a certain well-defined line, where, being met by the

* *Glaciation of Iar-Connaught and its Neighbourhood.* G. H. Kinahan, M.R.I.A., and Rev. Maxwell H. Close.

warm air of the valleys, they pass away in the milky torrents, familiar to any one who has stood, for instance, beside the Rhone, and seen it pour its white volumes into the Lake of Geneva, where, leaving behind it all the heavier and more insoluble part of its burden, it issues gaily upon the further side, the bluest of blue rivers leaping to the sea. Here, however, a very different order of things from this existed. The ice which has scraped and planed these hill-sides was not in fact a glacier at all. No puny glacier, such as hills of this height could alone have given birth to, would ever have reached a tithe of the distance covered by this mighty stream, one arm of which alone has been traced the whole way up the valley of Lough Mask, and out at Killala Bay, a distance of over sixty miles; while how much further it went no human being of course can tell, all further traces of it being henceforth hidden by the sea. To find a region where ice is now *really* moulding and fashioning the landscape, as it once moulded and fashioned these Galway valleys and hillsides, we must go, not to Switzerland or to any temperate region at all, but to a very much less comfortable part of the world—to Greenland and the icy shores of Baffin's Bay. There, in the grim and gruesome regions of the "central silence," few, if any, of the phenomena familiar to us in Switzerland are to be seen; no tall peaks rising out of green laughing valleys; no glaciers with their wrinkled ice falls, their blue crevices, and their brown moraines; everything, save a few here and there of the highest summits, being hidden away under a huge all-encompassing death-shroud of snow and ice, from which all life, and nearly all movement, have vanished. So, too, it must once have been with our Twelve Pins, and with all the region round about. They too have known what it is to be smothered up in ice and snow; ice which in this instance must have risen high above their heads, as its handiwork can be seen written upon the crags at the summit; though how many feet or hundreds of feet higher, it would doubtless puzzle even the best and most experienced of geologists to decide.

Meanwhile we must not expend the whole of the time at our disposal upon one mountain summit, but must hasten away to other though not perhaps necessarily more attractive scenes.

I just now said that Iar-Connaught was a land of lakes; but, if so, it is even more emphatically a land of streams. Go where we will our ears are filled with the noise of running water. Streams drop upon us from the rocks, dash across the road under our feet, and appear unexpectedly in all directions. Many, too, of the lakes are united to one another by streams—strung together, as it were, upon a thin silvery thread of water. Not many, certainly, of these streams attain to any very great volume, but what they lack in size they more than make up for by their multitude. Larger ones, such as the Erriff and Joyce's River, are fed by an infinite number of small rivulets, which come racing down the hillsides from a thousand invisible sources, and after prolonged rains the hills appear literally streaked with white, so closely do the torrents lie

together. Where smaller streams find their own way to the sea, their course is often impeded and almost obstructed by the mass of stones and detritus which they have themselves brought down from the hills. Walking up one of these stream-sides, one is often fairly astounded at the size and the number of these blocks. Boulders, varying from the size of a hencoop to that of a comfortable-sized cottage, strew the bed of the stream, witnesses of a thousand forgotten storms. In the wider portions these get often piled up into small rocky islands, where sods of peat lodge, and where the young birch and mountain ash spring up safe from the tooth of marauding sheep or goats. It is in the narrower portions, however, where the stream has had to saw a channel for itself through the hard face of the rock that the boulders become jammed and accumulate to such an extraordinary degree, often filling the narrow channel to the very brim, and obliging the water to escape, as best it can, in a series of small gushes and separate torrents, which meet again in a tumultuous rush below the obstruction. No one can wander much over this district without coming to the conclusion that these streams are very much smaller most of them now than they once were. Several facts point to this conclusion. Even after the heaviest rains their present carrying power is certainly insufficient to enable them to transport the enormous blocks with which we find their course encumbered; added to which the channels themselves are often much larger than are at present needed, and in some instances, as along the course of the Erriff River, are being actually now filled up with bog. Indeed, when we remember how lately the whole of this district was one great forest, traces—melancholy traces—of which are to be seen in every direction; when we come upon stumps of oak high up upon the bleak hill-sides, where now nothing taller than the bilberry or the bog myrtle grows; when, on the other hand, pushing out from the shore, we look over our boat-side and see the big "corkers" rising up out of the marl and sand in which their roots lie buried—seeing all this, and remembering how invariably the destruction of forests is followed by a diminution of rainfall, it is not difficult to believe that, numerous as are these streams and rivers now, they were once more numerous, and certainly very much larger than they are at present.

North of Galway Bay the country is comparatively flat, and there the rivers run chiefly between low ridges or hills of drift, whose sides are thickly strewn with the omnipresent granite boulders which there form such a prominent feature in the landscape. Much of this district is uninteresting and monotonous enough, yet even here the scenery along the river edge is often full of interest and beauty. As often as the stream takes a bend, a little triangular patch of intensely fertile ground accumulates upon the convex side, where the river year by year has deposited a share of the spoil which it has elsewhere filched. These little fertile plots are taken advantage of, and respectable crops of oats and potatoes grown right up to the brink of the water, which is only too

apt to overflow and destroy them when a freshet comes down from the hills. Here too, for the same reason, grow the loosestrifes and meadow-sweets, not scattered as elsewhere, but in a dense variegated jungle, which is repeated, leaf for leaf and petal for petal, in the smooth brown currents below. Nowadays the region is but a very thinly populated one. Looking around us, we see in every direction rows upon rows of granite boulders lifting their grey sides out of the purple heather, while in one direction, perhaps, and in one direction only, a cottage, or a couple of cottages, scarcely less grey and time-worn, may be seen peering disconsolately over the little hills. As for trees, often for long distances the stunted, much-enduring thorn-bushes are the only representatives of these to be seen ; then a corner is turned, and suddenly, out of the wild melancholy moor, the stream rushes all at once into a tiny glen or valley green with brushwood, and gay with *Osmunda* and bell-heather and half-submerged willow-herbs—a genuine scrap of the old forest, where the gnarled oak stumps have sent up young shoots, and where the birch and willow and mountain ash dip downward so as almost to touch the water ; then another turn, and the glen is left behind, and we are out once more in the open moor. No better way of getting to know this country can be devised than by following the vagrant course of one of these streams from its source to its finish, though it must be owned that the walking is far from invariably delightful. Where footpaths, with stiles or holes in the walls, have been left for the benefit of fishermen, there matters, of course, are simplified ; this, however, is quite the exception. Generally the explorer has to make his own way over the tottering lacework walls, whose stones have a most uncomfortable predisposition to fall upon his toes. When there are bridges, which is seldom, they usually consist of a few logs, supported and covered over with huge stones in a primitive and Cyclopean fashion. On smaller streams the bridges are of loose stones only, the central arch being flanked right and left with lesser ones, so as to allow the water in flood-time to escape. More often still there are no bridges at all, or only at intervals so wide as to be practically useless ; he is forced, therefore, to find out his own crossing, choosing between stumping bodily through the stream, or picking his steps along the slimy tops of the stones, where the water rushes and races under his feet at the rate of some forty miles an hour, or slips by in those long oily curves which always seem to draw our eyes down to them whether we will or no. Nor is this the only or even the chief part of his difficulties. What with crossing and re-crossing the stream ; now skirting along where the projecting rocks nearly push him into the water ; now out again into the open, clambering over huge boulders crouched like petrified dragons or mammoths in his path ; now picking his steps through squelching bog-holes, or, again, balancing upon tussocks which give way under his tread—what with all this, and the endless climbing of walls, the explorer who has conscientiously followed one of these streams through all its windings and doublings will find that he has

about had his full share, and something more than his fair share, of walking by the time he again reaches home. In wild weather, when the wind is from the Atlantic, gales blow straight up these glens, cutting the tops off the small waves as they come careering over the stones, and apparently doing their best to drive the water up-stream again. A salmon leap is a fine sight on such a day as that. The water, no longer a series of insignificant trickles, comes down in a broad yellow gush, sending out great flakes of foam before it, to be carried back by the wind and lodged in creamy clots upon the trees and upon every scrap of herbage within reach. On such days, the whole glen above the fall may often be seen through a sheet of finely divided spray, caught from the fall and flung backwards by the wind. Standing above the leap, and looking down, we may see the big salmon and white trout crowding in the pool below us, their heads held well up-stream, despite the tug of the current in the opposite direction. Now and then one detaches himself from the rest, leaps upward, quivers a moment in mid-air, and then, in nine cases out of ten, falls headlong down into the pool again. The height to which both salmon and white trout will spring on these falls is astonishing, a leap of eight and ten feet being by no means unusual; and, however often defeated, after a few moments' rest the same salmon may be seen returning again and again to the assault. When thus intent upon business the fish seem to lose all their natural shyness, as if every faculty was for the moment concentrated wholly in the effort to reach the upper waters. Leaning over the rocks alongside of the salmon leap, we may stoop so as to actually touch with a stick the smooth brown backs so temptingly near at hand, and we shall find that they take little or no notice, merely moving to one side, without for a moment relaxing in their efforts to reach the top—a trait which unfortunately has the effect of making them fall only too easy a prey to the local poacher. No art of any sort is required to spear a salmon when, spent and exhausted, it reaches the top of its climb. Armed with a gaff—one extemporised out of a scythe—the loafing "gossoon" or village ne'er-do-weel may pick and choose amongst a crowd of salmon and white trout, and the silvery scales which catch the eye here and there amongst the wet grass are a proof only too convincing that he has not neglected his opportunities.

Throughout the whole of this part of Iar-Connaught the presence of the granite largely influences the character of the landscape. Where limestone predominates we usually get peculiarly transparent effects, delicate aerial greys and blues everywhere prevailing. On the other hand, limestone is cold, and even when weathered the rocks seldom present any particular beauty of detail. Granite, on the contrary, lends itself peculiarly to richness of colouring, no foreground being so rich as a foreground of granite rocks. Here, too, the granite has an especial beauty of its own, from the presence of large pink or violet crystals of feldspar, which in weathered places frequently stand out in bold relief, as though handfuls of pale amethysts had been sprinkled loosely over

the surface. Lichens, too, of a peculiar brilliancy and beauty cling to the granite, so that whatever else is wanting to the picture we may always count upon a foreground of ever-varying beauty and interest. A few of these boulders might nevertheless be spared with advantage! The multitude strewn broadcast over the whole face of the country here is almost past belief, and increases perceptibly as we approach the sea—here cropping up in the middle of a potato patch—there built into the sides of a cabin—now raised on stalks showing the amount of wear and tear which has gone on since they took their place—now sunk deep in the ground with only a corner appearing above the brown turf mould. Many show signs of having fallen from a height, lying broken as they fell, not flung about in fragments, but seamed through and through with a single crack, which has been further prized open by small stones falling in at the top and gradually working their way to the bottom; others again stand perched high overhead, or balanced upon the very brink of a cliff, as though ready to be launched upon some aerial voyage. Foreign rocks, quartzes, sandstones, and mica-schists, coming from the other side of the country, mingle occasionally with the granite, all contrasting strongly, in their rough-hewn masses, with the smooth glacier-ground rocks upon which they rest, and which are as smooth and as polished still as if the great ice-plane had only left them yesterday.

Now that we are approaching the coast we find that our stream widens. Strengthened by a couple of contributions, it has swollen well-nigh to the proportions of a river. No longer champing and churning, fretting against every stone in its bed, it rolls silently, conscious that at last it is nearing its destiny. Now fast and fleet, but with hardly a sound, it swirls along under the tottering banks, raking out all the loose stones and water-weeds; now widening into a mimic lake, and then again narrowing as it rushes between two steeply overhanging rocks. The last corner is turned. The grey hills of Clare rise over the parapet of the little bridge; between them and us flash the waters of the bay, with perhaps a solitary "pookhaun" or "hooker" working upon their way to Galway; under the bridge darts the stream, and with a flash and a ripple, and a quick noisy rattle over the stones, it has taken its last leap, and flung itself rejoicing into the arms of the sea.

From the hills we have wandered to the rivers; from the rivers let us now glance for a few minutes along the shore. Leaving Galway with its fringe of villas and of bathing-houses behind us, the road runs westward for many a mile, along a low coast, varied only by an occasional ridge or "esker" of granite drift. The shore itself mainly consists of loosely piled boulders, alternating with small sandy bays; the most unprofitable of all shores, by the way, for the marine zoologist, whose game is apt to be uprooted with every tide. Here and there, however, long reefs project seaward, and these being seamed with fissures

are worth exploring when they can be reached, which generally is only at the dead low tide. As we advance we find ourselves passing over an endless succession of low drift-hills with intervening valleys choked with boulders, the road keeping steadily west, the country growing wilder and wilder with every mile. At Barna a small grove of trees is passed, with grass and ferns growing rich and rank beneath their shadow. The trees themselves are nothing very particular,—a few moderate sized oaks, with ash, and a sprinkling of sycamores, and elsewhere doubtless pass them without a glance; here, however, we turn to look at them again and again with an interest quite pathetic, sighing regretfully as we pass out into the grey desolate moorland again. It were worth spending a few weeks in Iar-Connaught, if only to learn to appreciate trees for the future! Still on and on, and on, mile after mile, over a treeless, almost featureless tract, abounding in stones and abounding in very little else. A police barrack, green with ivy, up which some dog-roses are creeping, is greeted with enthusiasm. So, too, are a couple of villas, through whose gates we catch a pleasant vista of haycocks, and children playing, with the rocks and the tumbled surf beyond. Turning away from this somewhat lamentable foreground, we fix our eyes upon the range of terraced hills which stretch beyond the bay, and further yet again to where a line—worn by distance to a mere thread—shows where the far-famed cliffs of Moher lift their six hundred feet of rock above the sea. Westward again, the three isles of Aran stream across the horizon, so low and grey as hardly to be visible, save where the surf catches against their rock-girt sides; yet, looking intently, we can, even at this distance, distinguish the huge outline of Dun Connor, the great rath which crowns the middle island, and whose watch-fires when lighted must have been visible along the entire line of coast from the Mayo hills to the mountains of Kerry. About Spidal the scenery begins to improve. Far in the distance the Twelve Pins once more come into sight, long chains of lakes stretching northward to their very feet. Near Tully the coast is broken up into small brown creeks, where turf is being dug at low tide; islands dot themselves about in the bay beyond; a substantial-looking row of coastguard houses presently rises into sight, with chimneys hospitably smoking; yet another half-mile, and we find ourselves brought up short by the discovery that our road ends abruptly, all further advance in this direction being hopelessly at an end. We have in fact arrived at a regular *cul-de-sac*—one of the many to be found in Iar-Connaught. Only one road of any kind extends beyond this point, and that merely lands us at a fishing lodge some three miles or so further on. To reach the mountains which we see so distinctly before us, we must either retrace our steps to Spidal, and so round by Oughterard, a distance of over forty miles, or else take to the moors, and try to make our own way across country, an attempt which would probably result in our having to crave hospitality for the night at some cabin door, the chances of reaching any

other shelter before nightfall being problematical to a degree. A more unfrequented and a more unbefriended region is perhaps hardly to be found in Her Majesty's dominions than that same stretch of country between Cashla and Roundstone Bay. Life there is indeed reduced to the very elements. A few villages exist, thinly scattered over its surface, but hardly any roads connecting them—none certainly over which vehicles with springs could travel. Everywhere, too, the land is invaded by long arms of sea, still further increasing the difficulties of communication. For instance, as the crow flies, the distance between this point and Roundstone is barely twenty miles ; whereas, if the coast-line were followed, it would probably be found to extend to fully five times that length. The variety of sea-board, too, is extraordinary ; many of the islands being separated from the mainland by the merest streak of sea, the promontories, on the other hand, being in several instances connected by strips of land so low that a depression of a few feet would result in the setting free of a fresh crop of islands. The best, indeed the only, way of exploring this, the wildest bit of all Iar-Connaught, is to take boat, and to sail from headland to headland, and in and out of the archipelagoes of islands, which choke up every bay, and lie scattered in a thick fringe along the coast. There are several landing-places, but the most convenient probably will be found to be Roundstone, where the harbour is good, and a pier, built when dreams of an Atlantic packet station were in the air, stands ready for us to moor up our yacht or hooker. Here, too, is an hotel, and here, if the traveller is a naturalist, he can hardly do better than spend a few days, for not only is the shore itself unusually rich in zoology, but in the bay below he will find perhaps the best dredging-ground to be met with along the entire line of coast. From Roundstone the road lies direct to Clifden, which claims, and fairly claims I suppose, to be the capital of our mountain region. Thence, turning northward, we bowl along the wide coaching road, through the refreshingly clean little village of Letterfrack ; through the valley of Kylemore, where the towering crest of the Diamond stands a glittering sentry over our heads ; under steep wooded banks ; past more lakes and glens, and across a valley floored with bog, until we suddenly find that we have come full circle, and are back again at the foot of the Twelve Pins, the place from which we originally started.

Two more remarks before I end. First as to the question of popularity, or rather lack of popularity. It is undeniable that few regions equally come-at-able, and equally admittedly striking and picturesque, find so few admirers, not to say lovers, as Connemara. People come and go, drive along its roads, fish in its lakes, and even praise it after a fashion, but grudgingly ; they break into no raptures, as for instance over Killarney, and, what is still more significant, they seldom show any particular desire to return to it again. Now this probably may be set down to a combination of causes. Its hotels, for one thing, are not (with one or two exceptions) by any means equal to the demands of

modern sophistication; and this, deny it who will, is a very important factor in the matter. When a man's cogitations are secretly turning upon the badness of his breakfast, and the yet more doubtful prospect which awaits him at dinner, he is seldom, it must be owned, in the mood for very warmly appreciating scenery—especially when that scenery is admittedly somewhat of the bleak and hungry kind. Then, again, there is another and a very serious matter—the weather! Without going into the vexed and oft-disputed question as to whether this part of Ireland or the west of Scotland is the worst and the wettest, it may be admitted at once, and without further question, that it is bad—*very bad indeed*. Even while in the very act of abusing it, however, it is only fair to add that to this very badness, fractiousness, what you will, of the climate the scenery owes a share, and to my mind a by no means inconsiderable share, of its charm. The actual landscape doubtless is fine, but the actual landscape is nothing, literally nothing, until you have seen it under a dozen different moods: now grey and sullen; now fierce and passionate; now, when you least expect it, flashing out smile after smile, as only an Irish landscape can smile when the sun suddenly catches it after a spell of rain. At all events I can personally vouch for the fact of long-continued dry weather being anything but becoming to the scenery. Wanting the moisture which lends them atmosphere and distance, the mountains lose their aerial tints, become dull and grey, oppressed as it were with their own nakedness. I remember (the statement, by the way, is not perhaps a particularly credible one)—nevertheless as a matter of fact I *do* remember a summer in the west of Ireland, when for weeks together not a shower fell. The loughs sank low in their beds of rock; the bogs, seamed with cracks, showed as dry as so many high roads; the grass turned brown; the flowers withered; the mountains, hard as iron, stood out with every muscle in their stony anatomy brought into the strongest possible relief; now and then a wind got up, but no rain fell; every atom of moisture seemed to have vanished out of the atmosphere, and from morning till night the sun shone down with the same broad, unwinking persistency. It was exactly what everybody had always been wishing and sighing for, but somehow when it came no one appeared particularly gratified, and I can recall no very genuine expression of regret when at last one morning we got up to find that the sky had lost its brazen look, and that the greys had once more resumed their dominion. Nowhere, perhaps, in the world are there such greys as here—pale greys, dark greys, greys tinted with blue, and with green, and with rose-colour; greys merging and melting into one another, and into every other tint imaginable. Yet nowhere, on the other hand, is the colouring more gorgeous when now and then the sky does take a colouring fit. See it at the coming on of rain! A minute, perhaps, ago sky and sea were cloudless; suddenly as you look again the clouds have gathered, struck against the cold sides of the mountains, and begun to descend in rain, which goes sweeping like a pall

along the whole length of the valley, brushing against the flanks of the mountains, and passing away eastward, to be followed by a rapid burst of sunshine, bringing out the colours of the wet grass and smoking rocks ; in its turn passing on, reappearing for an instant in fantastic patches of light upon the distant slopes, and then again being swallowed up in the wide-spreading darkness of another sudden storm. The brilliancy and swift chromatic changes of these alternate sun-bursts and rain-squalls are indescribable, and, when seen from a height where they can be followed across a wide stretch of mountain and sea, they constitute a never-failing panorama—a drama the incidents of which are perpetually varying. One is in fact tempted to dwell far *too* much upon these transitory effects, because in a climate so capricious it is they rather than the [permanent features which create the most vivid and lasting impressions. Looking back into that private picture-gallery which most of us, consciously or unconsciously, carry about with us, two scenes at this moment start into my memory, and both, as will be seen, owe the fact of their being remembered at all not certainly to anything in the actual scenery, but wholly and solely to the disposition of the lights and atmosphere.

The first was an effect of early morning seen from a window overlooking a wide tract of comparatively low-lying land, sodden with recent rain, where small pools caught the eye, leading it on to a large fresh-water lough which lay beyond. Across this tract lay the arch of a rainbow, stretching from the grey of the water to the pale green of the hillsides above. Not a rainbow which came and vanished, but a rainbow which hovered and lingered ; now fading until it was all but invisible, now unexpectedly flaring into sudden splendour again. And behind, the nearest hills were vague and dim with mist, while the distant ones were wholly hidden under a vast and capacious cloud-canopy, through which a pale sun shone upon the lough, so that it gleamed like a tarnished shield. All the greens and blues had vanished out of the landscape, but the yellows seemed brighter than ever ; the highest note of all being struck where the foam, driven in a long sinuous line across the lough, was washed in a broad palpitating drift against the yellow sand.

The second—an effect of a very different kind—occurred at the end of one of those utterly hopeless days when the weather, after holding out some slight promise in the morning, settles down to rain with a dull and dogged self-satisfaction, as if it never had rained before. For an hour or more we had been tramping homeward, knee-deep in drenching heather, and had just reached the crest of a ridge, overlooking the bay and the dull grey flanks of the opposite hills ; already the sun had set behind fourfold walls of cloud without showing itself, and without a moment's intermission of the pelting rain. Suddenly, when we least expected it, an arrow of red light was seen to shoot across the leaden-coloured sky. Another and another followed. Layer after layer of clouds caught the glow, until the whole heavily-laden floor of heaven was burning with an

intense and terrible conflagration, out of the very midst of which bars of molten metal appeared to rise, writhing and melting as in a furnace. Across all this swept a few lighter clouds, driven by the wind, each tipped with an edge of light, too intensely luminous to be looked at. A rush of colour, caught from the sky, spread itself over the dull face of the bay, the very stream at our feet being tinged with the pale opal-coloured tints. Nor was this all; for the clouds, which had been rolling overhead, began suddenly to descend; not in wisps and scrolls, nor in a thin impalpable veil, but altogether, in a vast and apparently solid body; rolling, pouring, gathering on the tops of the hills, and streaming down through the passes. It was a regular cloud-avalanche; and, despite our knowledge that we were too near home to run any risk by being enveloped in its folds, there was something curiously alarming in the sight of these huge summits rolling downhill, and approaching momentarily nearer. On and on they came, until suddenly, just as they were within about a hundred yards of us, their course was arrested by a fresh conflicting current of air. Here, then, the vanguard stood still, and began slowly melting, passing away in thin shreds and rags of vapour; but the rearguard still continued to pour in fresh reinforcements from behind; which, accumulating faster than they could be dissipated, reared themselves up in vast dome-like masses, towering thousands of feet in air, and gradually slipping downwards until they had enveloped not only us, but the whole valley in their folds. An hour later the overcharged atmosphere relieved itself by a couple of violent thunder-claps following one another in quick succession; after which the night grew calm and clear, and the next morning was glorious; but, alas! before the day ended the dull, persistent, pitiless drizzle had again set in.

E. L.

Upstairs and Downstairs.

A ROSY lass stands one evening in a bare-boarded room where the shadows are gathering quickly. Except for some wooden chairs and a table, and a few books upon some shelves in a corner, the place is empty enough; but the windows look out upon the river, upon a great vault of drifting sky, upon the floating vapours, and the thousand lights of London that are kindling along the banks and reflected into the stream. A small maiden stands perched upon a chair in the window, rubbing her nose against the pane and absorbed by the unaccustomed sight of the fiery lights and the rushing waters, and above all by the swinging creaks of a giant crane at work just in front of the house. The little one has come with a party of visitors, who together with the rosy girl, and a busy lady secretary, just leaving the room, represent for the moment what the report calls "the Central Office of the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants." And of all the long names ever given to a most simple and efficient piece of work this seems to be one of the longest. The whole thing is a necessary and very friendly bit of machinery, chiefly worked by the goodwill of the various people concerned in it. It is much to be wished that the number of those who are kindly disposed with help of money and good service could grow with the society itself, which has spread in one direction and another, and which, from the few hundreds of girls with which it began, has now near 3,000 upon its books—a statistician might tell us how many more there are growing up, a youthful ever-increasing congregation of many necessities and claims, troublesome enough, at times, but rarely ungrateful. These girls are divided among a certain number of associates, who are prepared to take an interest in their affairs. One could see the whole thing represented that evening at a glance—the books upon the shelf, the people who wish to help, the office, and the rosy lass herself, an item of the 3,000, who had come in by chance and been asked to tea. She stood a sturdy little figure in the usual smart hat and cloth jacket of "a general," with a round-faced and a bright-eyed and unmistakable "out for a holiday" air. She seemed quite prepared for conversation, but our first start was not propitious.

"Are you in service? Are you a little nurse?" I ask affably.

"I ain't *in* service; I'm *out* at service," says the girl, somewhat offended. "Nor I ain't a nurse neither; I'm a general servant; but master says I could be a housemaid any day. I don't like children myself," she goes on, "but ours ain't no trouble; they are such good little things. I minds the three; and I does the house and cleans out

the kitchen. I've had a very nice holiday" brightening up; "I've been round and round by myself, and across the bridge, ever so far, and then I come back here at last to see Miss D——."

"You look like a country girl," says one of the ladies. "Do you know your way about London?"

"I'm a London girl, I am. I was born in the New Cut. I knows my way. I ain't ever been in the country," says the child. "I've heard say mother was a country girl once, long ago. Mother's dead, she is, and father's in China, aunt says. He don't care nothen' about me (angrily), and I don't want to have nothen' to do with him; he never did nothen' for me. Miss D—— she found me my place."

And this was true enough, and Miss D—— told me afterwards of all the trouble she had to find the place, which had, however, turned out well. For many months before going there the girl had been tiresome and unruly, and no one would keep her. She was saucy, intractable, violent at times; but at last a special place was found, and in this special friendly effort lies the whole secret of this unpretending work. "We are often sorely puzzled what to do with them," said Miss D——. "Sometimes, as a last resource, we have been obliged to advertise, 'Will anybody take a difficult tempered or dishonest girl on trial?' and people actually do come forward in answer, and very often the girls we have despaired of do well after all."

Besides the Central Office of the Association there are branch offices all over London now—at Chelsea, Islington, Notting Hill, Paddington, North St. Pancras, South St. Pancras, Poplar, Southwark, Wandsworth, Westminster, Whitechapel, and Fulham. Each of these offices means a committee and a certain number of visitors, who undertake to help and care about a certain number of little girls who are from circumstances among the most absolutely friendless and helpless members of society. Their fathers have abandoned them or are dead; their mothers are dead, or mad, or drunk; they have no relations, or, worse still, only bad ones. They have been kept alive, indeed, by the State; but the State at best is more of an incubator than a parent, and this Association for years past has tried to help the children, with some heart and pity to spare for so much helplessness and childish misery.

When Mrs. Nassau Senior was appointed Inspector of Girls' Schools by Mr. Stansfeldt, she became convinced after experience (which experience she had gathered together during many previous years) that, although most of the masters and chaplains of district schools had made an effort (quite independently of their own hard work) towards continuing the care of the children after they had left the district schools, yet some further organisation was absolutely necessary for their proper supervision. Workhouse girls generally leave school for domestic service at about fourteen, and are not at that early age, any more than other girls, supernaturally endowed with every discretion and necessary experience of life. Some few happily constituted little creatures, established by chance in

comfortable homes, may have scrubbed on and prospered ; but the average of those who failed, who came to utter grief and disaster, to prison, and to the streets, to untimely death in hospitals and workhouse wards, was something cruel. About two-thirds of the girls whose careers were traced, with much pains and difficulty, by Mrs. Senior and her assistants were found to be utter failures. And, indeed, when one thinks of it, three clean shifts and half a dozen aprons and two pairs of stout shoes, or whatever the outfit may be, is scarcely to be regarded as a complete armoury against the many perils of life. Cruel mistresses exist, though they are not very common, I am told ; but what a crowd of insinuating temptations, of possible dangers exist as well ! The little stupid creatures come friendless and scared, or, worse still, impudently ignorant, to the little places where they are as much at the mercy of their own tempers as of their mistresses'. If temptation comes, if they succumb to it, if they break down from over-work, woe betide them ; they have not a friend to turn to. If they are dismissed, if the mistress is unkind, or only very poor and overstrained herself, if they fall ill and are sent to the hospital, or if they are sent away, they wander off from the area gate or the hospital door, with no human being to help them, with no refuge except, indeed, the casual ward of the workhouse, from which they come, and to which they must return.

The Association for Befriending Young Servants was formed upon the model of another which had been tried at Bristol by some kind women who felt the want of some such scheme of help and protection. Some meetings were called ; a certain number of ladies living in different parts of the town offered their services ; a certain number of guardians offered to assist ; lists of the girls as they left the schools were given to the Association ; various small offices were opened here and there ; girls were divided among the ladies willing to help them, and henceforth were visited at their places, distinguished apart, helped in case of necessity, advised and received into special homes when necessary.

One kind and most influential friend to the little maid-servants, no less a person than the Speaker of the House of Commons, addressing on their behalf the Lord Mayor himself and any kind-hearted aldermen that happened to take an interest in the subject, explained in a few terse and lucid sentences the whole working of the administration :—

“The Speaker said that he had for the last two days laid aside the consideration of the Land Bill, and taken to the study of the reports of the Association. The composition of the Association had some peculiar features, for it was formed wholly of women. There were no men employed, except a very few who were members of the council and assisted its deliberations with their advice. The Association was founded by a lady—Mrs. Senior—whose memory would be dear to most of those present. The work of the Association was truly a woman's work from beginning to end. The friendless girls, for whose welfare the Association was solicitous, were divided into two classes—one class embracing desti-

tute and friendless girls struggling to earn a livelihood by domestic service in the Metropolis, who had been in pauper schools, and who, when discharged from pauper schools, were consigned to the care of the Association every year. The Association took care of them until they were twenty years of age; and there were now accumulated 917 destitute girls, over whom the Association kept careful watch.

"The girls discharged from the pauper schools were brought into correspondence with the Association in this way:—The Metropolis, as was well known, was divided into thirty-two unions, the guardians of most of which were in correspondence with the Association, and he hoped the day was not far distant when all of them would be. When girls left the pauper schools, they were placed in domestic service, and their names and addresses were sent to the Central Office of the Association by order of the guardians. The work of the Association was divided amongst eleven branches, covering the greater part of the Metropolis. The girls were each placed in communication with some branch of the Association according to their address, and each girl was assigned to a member of the branch, who made herself responsible for the care of her, and reported upon her condition and conduct from time to time to the committee. A principle of the Association which was of the greatest importance, and to the maintenance of which, he believed, much of the success which had attended the work of the Association was due, was the intimate relationship which existed between the lady visitors who undertook the care of the girls and the girls themselves.

"As to the second class of girls he had mentioned—those who had not been in the pauper schools—he found from the Report that no less than 1,600 had been during the past year placed in situations in domestic service, while many more girls had been assisted in other ways. This class of girls also was consigned to the care of lady visitors who watched over their welfare. Attached to each branch of the Association was a registry office, which had proved of great value in securing employment for the girls coming under the care of the Association.

"With regard to the financial condition of the Association, he found that the Central Office cost about 500*l.* a year, and the Central Home about 400*l.* a year. This Central Home of the Association was no doubt somewhat expensive, but was absolutely necessary, as the Association had to deal in the course of a year with (speaking roughly) nearly 3,000 girls, in whose circumstances there were many changes. The Society dealt with a very large number of girls, and the whole cost was 2,020*l.*, which gave an average of something like 15*s.* a head."

This does not seem a very exorbitant subscription for the results achieved—3,000 little charmaids helped and comforted, and scolded and advised, and kept from incalculable temptation and wretchedness; sheltered when homeless, nursed when they are sick, encouraged and comforted in every way.

If only some philanthropist or millionaire, instead of building

another empty palace, would bestow 2,000*l.* a year upon the Association, no more meetings, articles, or collections would be necessary ; but then the millionaire would not have the pleasure of seeing his bricks and mortar piled up before his eyes.

The first office the Association ever opened was at Chelsea, a friendly little place which takes a benevolent interest in the various domestic fortunes and misfortunes of the neighbourhood. If you go there of a Monday morning you may find a room full of customers of various sizes, and an almost providential adjustment of different requirements. But indeed most of these offices are alike. There was one at B., where I spent an hour the other morning admiring the cheerful presence of mind of the manager, who seemed able to combine all sorts of difficult requirements. It was, as usual, crowded when I went in.

"Well, you see," a stout lady was saying confidentially, "I'm so much alone of evenings, my husband being out with the carriage, I want a girl for comp'ny as much as anything else. I don't want no house work from her. I want her to do any little odd jobs I can't attend to myself, and to mind the children. That was a good little girl enough you sent me, Miss Y—— ; but, dear me, she was always a crying for her mother. I let her out on Mondays, and Wednesdays, and Fridays ; but she wanted to go home at night as well, and now she says she won't stay."

"It's her first place, m'am," says Miss Y——. "They are apt to be home-sick at first ; but here is a very good little girl who has no home, poor child, she is quite alone. Fanny, my dear, should you like to live with Mrs. —— and take care of her nice little children ? You might like to take her home with you now directly, m'am, and show her the place and the dear children ?"

Smiling Fanny steps forward briskly, and off they go together. Then a pretty young lady, fashionably dressed, begins—

"That girl was no good at all, Miss Y——. Such a dance as she led me ! She came and gave me a reference miles away, and, ill as I was, I dragged myself there ; and when I got to the house she opened the door, and said her mistress was out and was never at home at all. I said at once, 'You don't want to come to us, and you haven't the courage to say so,' and then she shut the door in my face and ran away. The fact is, many girls don't like houses with apartments. Our first floor is vacant at present, but I hope it will soon be let ; and I should be so glad to find a girl who would come at once, and who knows something of cookery, though my mother always likes to superintend herself in the kitchen."

"There is a young woman here who says she can cook," says the superintendent doubtfully, "but there seems to be some difficulty about getting her character. Do you think we had better write to your mistress for it, my dear ?"

A poor, fierce, wildbeast-looking creature, who had been glaring in a corner, here in answer growls, "I don't know, I'm sure."

"Why did you leave?" says the young lady.

"Cos she had such a violent temper," says the girl, looking more and more ferocious.

"That is a sad thing for anybody to have," said the young lady gravely.

At this moment a boy puts his head in at the door. "Got any work for me?" says he.

"No, no," cry all the girls together. "This isn't for boys; this is for females," and the head disappears.

"Well, and what do you want?" says the superintendent, quite bright and interested with each case as it turns up, and a spruce young person, who had been listening attentively, steps forward and says, looking hard at the young lady who had been speaking.

"I wish for a place, if you please, m'am, with a little cooking in it, where the lady herself superintends in the kitchen—a ladies' house that lets apartments, if you please; and I shouldn't wish for a private house, only an apartment house." At which the young lady, much pleased, steps forward, and a private confabulation begins.

While these two people are settling their affairs a mysterious person in a veil enters and asks anxiously in a sort of whisper, "Have you heard of anything for me, miss? You see (emphatically) it is something so *very* particular that I require, quite out of the common."

"Just so," says Miss Y—. "I won't forget."

"It is peculiar, and you won't mention it to anyone," says the other, and exit mysteriously with a confidential sign.

Follows a smiling little creature, with large round eyes.

"Well," said Miss Y—, who is certainly untiring in sympathy and kindness, "is it all right? Are you engaged, Polly?"

"Please, miss, I'm *much* too short," says the little maiden.

As we have said, it is not only the district girls who apply at these offices; all the young persons of the neighbourhood are made welcome by the recording angels (so they seemed to me), who remember all their names, invite them to take a seat on the bench, produce big books where their histories, necessities, and qualifications are all written down, and by the help of which they are all more or less "suited." Besides a home, a mistress, a kitchen to scrub, if they behave themselves they are also presented with a badge and honourable decoration, fastened by a blue ribbon, and eventually they are promoted to a red ribbon, the high badge of honour for these young warriors. And though some people may smile, it is, when we come to think of it, a hardly earned distinction, well deserved as any soldier's cross. What a campaign it is for them—a daily fight with the powers of darkness and ignorance, with dust, with dirt, with disorder. Where should we be without our little serving girls? At this moment, as I write by a comfortable fire, I hear the sound of the virtuous and matutinal broom in the cold passages below, and I reflect that these 3,000 little beings on our books are hard at work all over London and fighting chaos in the foggy twilight of a winter's morning.

It is a hard life at best for some of them ; so hard that they break down utterly in the struggle with temper and other tempers, with inexperience, with temptations of every sort. If one thinks of it one can imagine it all, and the impatience, and the petty deceptions, and the childish longings, almost irresistible, one might think, to little waifs who have no one to look to for praise if they are good or blame if they are naughty. And yet indeed they are not ungrateful ; they respond to any word of real friendship. "I am quite frightened sometimes to find how much they think of my opinion," said a good friend the other day, who has for some years past worked steadily for the Association. "They make me quite ashamed when they produce my wretched little notes out of their pockets." When I asked this lady about the children's comparative friendlessness, she said it was very rare to find them absolutely alone, but that in truth friends are often far worse enemies than loneliness. They come and take their poor little earnings. They lead them into mischief out of wanton wickedness, and desert them in their troubles. A girl came staggering into her office not long ago so ill that she could hardly stand. She had gone to her sister, whom she had always helped with her wages, and been in bed two days with fever, and then her sister would not let her stay, and turned her into the street, though she fell twice as she was dressing. It was a case of small-pox, and the poor thing was sent off to the Small-pox Hospital. "I went to see her there," said Miss T——, speaking quite as a matter of course. "The poor child began searching under her pillow and showed me a little scrap of a note I had written her a year before, which she had carried about ever since. One can scarcely believe," the kind lady said, "how they prize a little interest, a little friendly intercourse with some one who cares about what happens to them."

The letters which come to Miss T—— are of every variety. The first I take up comes from a curious sort of girl :—

"Dear Madam,—You will be surprised to hear that I have left Mrs. —, but she was so unkind that I left her on Friday, which was two days before the time was up, so she kept 2s. 6d. out of my wages. But before leaving I asked God to open some other place, but thought that He had not heard me ; and as I was going to the station, I thought of the woman that did the washing. She had been very kind to me, and I did not like to go home without saying good-bye to her ; and if I had not I should not have heard of this place, and then I found that my prayer had been heard. And the housekeeper under whom I am living is a Christian, and has taught me a great deal about the Second Coming, which troubled me so much that I want to hear more and more, and am glad to say am saved from the wrath to come, and never was so happy in my life ; and I only went to church twice in the ten weeks at Mrs. —, and I now go to chapel three times on Sunday and three evenings in the week.—Your humble Servant, B. B."

Another little girl, for whose theological leanings one certainly feels

more sympathy than for "B. B.'s," writes to say that since the family has moved she goes "to a very nice little chapple every Sunday evening." She thinks she likes it better than church; it is more understanding. And this seems an excellent summary in one simple word of the great vexed question of Dissent *versus* Church and State.

But neither chapel arousings nor church exhortings can touch these little creatures so closely as does that most divine function of human kindness which makes them truly feel their kinship to those who wish to be their friends: those who have been created true ministers to those who are in need.

"Would you be kind enough to get me a Place?" writes a very naughty girl, who is dismissed for complaining that she is starved (a fancy statement). "Do get me a place," she repeats; "please do—near home—as I will promise you to be a better girl; and I do ask God to help me to be a good servant, as you told me in your letter you sent me three years ago; and it was such a nise letter that I have got it now, 1878, and shall not part with it, for I am so prode of it; and beleave me to be your humble servant, R. E."

Then follows a penitential letter from a nurse of twelve years old, and whoslapped the baby. She is very sorry. "I have done everything to make her come to me, and yet sometimes the baby will not come to me; sometimes she will love me and kiss me, and other times the baby will tell me to go away. I'll try very much to be good; I want to be good; and I go to church every Sunday afternoon with the little baby.—Yours respectfully, JEMIMA."

Some of the children's letters are really very touching; one writes of her mistresses, "They are such dear ladies." "I like my Mrs. and Mr.," says another. "Sometimes I feel very downhearted, for it is lonely in the nursery, and it brings all manner of thoughts of home and how I should like to see them." But wholesome distractions arise, for her Mrs. has said she "could clean a grate beautifully, and her stove looks very nicely."

The letters are almost all warm-hearted and full of expression of affection. "May God give you strength as long as you live on this earth," says one little scrub; "and I hope we shall meet in heaven, and we shall never part again there."

"Dear Miss,—I now take the pleasure of writing to you. Will you write to me as soon as you can? It would make me feel so very happy." "I think I have said all, as I have to get the supper ready now; so good night," writes another, finishing with, "My dear friend, I remain your obedient servant, MARY ANNE. Will you please tell me if I don't end my letters right? It is a long time since I have written to a lady."

Here is a litany to another friend of mine from a little grateful girl:—"O, I hope you have not forsaken me, for I don't feel at all comfortable, for you have been a dear kind loving friend to me, and I should miss you very much. You have been kinder than a mother. I hope

you had a happy Christmas, also dear Miss S. (the cook), and Emily ; it seems a long, long time since I see them, and let me give my love to them, and I remain, yours ebendiently, EMMA W." Emma is seventeen. She had a disreputable, drunken mother and sister, from whom she is always trying to get away. She may well say, "Kinder than a mother," poor child !

The other day I asked a neighbour, whom I shall call Lucia, if she could tell me anything about any of the girls she had known. "I have nothing at all romantic to tell you," said Mrs. Lucia with a smile. "They are all very commonplace girls that I have ever had to do with. One little thing called Eliza sometimes comes to play in the garden with my own little daughter. Eliza is a funny little creature, with a nice fresh face, though she was brought up in a workhouse ; but she never opens her lips. She is more fortunate than some of them, for her mistress, the grocer's wife, is a good woman. Not long ago I went to see Eliza, and Mrs. Grocer came in and asked me if I could do anything to help a school friend of Eliza's who was to be sent by the guardians to the chandler's round the corner. Mrs. Grocer declared that Mrs. Chandler was quite unfit to have any child at her mercy. She got tipsy and beat her maids, and turned them out at night into the street. It is always a little difficult to interfere," said Lucia. But the guardians were spoken to privately and inquiry was made. The story was found to be true, and the poor child was not allowed to go. "And don't you think," said kind Lucia, "that this is one very real way in which the Association can be of use? It would be almost impossible, without some such means, to know the truth about the poor children."

The children may not know their friends' names or their existence as yet, but it is something after all to feel that there are people trying to find out the truth for them and patiently trying to enforce it.

My little girls gave an entertainment the other day which is not inapplicable to the subject. We had poked the fire again and again, and lit the candles and waited expectantly for nearly half-an-hour, the kettle was boiling, the buns were crying "Come, eat us ! come, eat us," the tea was getting cold. "Where can they be?" says Molly, "can they have lost their way?"

"Are the poor little girls walking round and round all alone in the streets, and haven't they got no mammas to hold their hands?" says little Cuckoo, who has already appeared perched on one of the chairs at the central office.

"Perhaps a policeman will tell them where to go," says Nancy. Are the children talking metaphors? One might almost think so, but there is no more time for speculation ; we hear a diffident tinkle at the bell, and after a minute's delay the company comes filing in one by one out of the dark street into the little lighted-up dining-room, where is spread a modest share of the night's festivities—some two pennyworth of

welcome, a few crackers and oranges, and a Christmas card or two. It is little enough, but the guests look with admiring eyes and seem more than satisfied and ready to enjoy the banquet. They are welcomed shyly by their young hostesses, and by a very short host with gold curls and steel buttons, and a white frock, who cuts a caper as they come in. "Oh, you dear little chap!" cries the company, catching sight of his beaming face, and rushing forward in a body. The poor little host is frightened, and pulls a piteous lip, and suddenly the phalanx stops short. "Take care, don't make him cry, poor little dear!" says one to another, and so they all take their places, still nodding and smiling at him over their shoulders. Then the banquet begins.

Fashions change about in names, as in every thing else. Edith, Emily, Amelia, who are the little washerwomen, sit down to tea, while Molly and Nancy hand the buns, and the little host, whose courage has come back, trots assiduously, without stopping for a moment, round and round the table with a plate of bread and butter at a surprising angle.

"I ironed his pinnyfore, m'am," says one of the little girls, looking after him.

The guests come from a small laundry establishment at Fulham, which was opened a year or two ago for their use and ours. It is hoped that high tempers may be there ironed a little smooth, and difficult natures soaped down and scrubbed, and that meanwhile fewer temptations may assail the little maidens than out at service, where they are left to their own resources. And this hope has been in a measure justified; for there are many girls unfit for domestic service, though they are strong and able to work. Some are saucy, some feel the inevitable worry of constant restrictions and demands, some of them have forfeited their character by petty pilfering and come here to earn another before they can start again. If you ask them their stories, they are much alike. They were taken to the District School when mother died, or left them. They were sent to service and didn't get on; out of the six here at tea, two had been in hospital after leaving their places, and the district lady had fetched them away. I ask after a girl who had not come with the others.

"Well, you see," said Edith, conversationally, "Elizabeth she went away one night from the home; she ran away to her mother, she did, and her mother she turned her into the street. She said she couldn't have her there no more, and so Elizabeth she come back to us and hid, and the girls gave her what they could; she slep' on the mangle at night, and all day long she sat in the coal-cellar. She used to tell us she could get half-a-crownd a day six days in the week if she left, but I don't think she got so much as that or she wouldn't have come back so soon. One of the ladies looked into the coal-cellar and found her sitting on the coals, and took her to another home."

All this is recounted by Edith in a most natural and easy-going manner. Next to Edith sits Emily, a pretty girl with fair hair and a pleasant placid smile, who takes up the tale.

"I don't mind the laundry work," says Emily. "I like it better than service. I was a very long time in my situation, and I didn't like it at all. Why didn't I like my situation? The lady she used to beat me till I was all over marks and bruises. I had to show my arms to the police after I left."

The little hostesses here gather round in sympathy and horror, while Emily continues with a certain complacency, "I don't think they put the lady in the papers; they put me in, so I was told. I was very short at the time, and she used to beat me about the head and shoulders too; some days she would go out all day and lock me in, and she would only leave out two bits of bread for all the time. She had a little boy of her own; she used to beat him just the same."

"And how did you get away?" says little Molly, breathless with pity.

"Well, you see Miss, she was a-bed one morning, and I was a lighting of her fire, and she had a cane by her, and she called me and began to cut at me, and I run out of the room, and the key was in the street door, and I went out and she being in her nightgown couldn't come after me, and I run a very long way till I met someone who told me to go to the office, and when they see what a state I was in they sent for the police, and the police put me in the papers," says Emily, taking another bun.

Emily's is an extreme case, but it is one which tells its own lesson and proves the necessity for the existence of the Office of Help to which she ran by some hapless chance. The school from which she had been sent to this vile mistress was a country union not falling as yet into the Society's organisation.

"I was a nurse, I was," says a little creature about as big as a child of nine years old. "I had twins and three more to mind; they wasn't much trouble. I did the rooms and missus made weskits. I used to help her when I had time, but there wasn't much, for I did the cooking too, and took the children out in the perambulator. I left because I was so very ill and had to go to the 'ospital, and one of the ladies she called at the 'ospital, and I was sent to a covalest 'ospital, and Miss S—— took me into the laundry after that."

As the Speaker said in his speech, it is an absolute necessity to have some one or two homes connected with the Association where girls may be received and harboured for a time in between their places. Lodgings are dangerous and expensive, and besides this, some girls are absolutely unfitted for common domestic service, and require some sort of training to quiet them down. "When they are at work from breakfast to dinner, and from dinner to tea, and then till bedtime again, they have no time to be naughty," said one of their matrons. It must be remembered that these poor little creatures are no community of immaculate beings, but many of them belong to a most turbulent and inexperienced class. They are obstinate, credulous, hot-tempered, with every disadvantage of birth and

education to counterbalance the efforts of their well-wishers. One of these, a very delightful person, who is, happily for them all, still alive and prospering in her undertaking, told me that there is a saying among them, "that three Sutton girls would kill any matron." This lady told me that no one who had not gone through the actual experience could imagine the difficulty of keeping the troublesome among them in order and tolerably happy too. They are so ignorant and careless of opinion that there is at first scarcely any standard by which to get at them. Little by little they learn better things and gain some experience in the ways of the civilised world.

One of these little Bosjes girls had been chosen out to wait upon the matron of the Hammersmith Home, and to bring in her meals. When the young person was told she need not bring in the luncheon-tray with her face and hands all over streaks of black lead, and that she should always try to look nice and tidy whenever she came into the Superintendent's room, she put down the tray, stared in absolute amazement, and exclaimed, "Well! I call that cheek." There are many more stories such as this, which give one a curious impression of the state of these unsophisticated minds; and yet when I paid a visit to this very Laundry Home, I could not but notice the good understanding and pleasantness of manner which seemed to exist between the inmates. Certainly there was no sign of any struggle going on, but cheerful noises, and voices, and echoes of singing everywhere. The Hammersmith Home stands at the corner of Chiswick Lane, on the high road to Richmond; it is close to that pretty colony at Bedford Park; and the old Home where the little laundry girls live may well hold its own with the most successful of Mr. Norman Shaw's beautiful designs. The pretty old country house which was once a family dwelling place, and where wide oaken staircases and carved chimneys tell of some ancient dignity and splendour, is now promoted to new dignity, and shelters a wider family than it ever did before. Dwelling houses shelter people for years, make a pleasant background to their comfortable existence, but homes such as these take in a whole barren life, stock it with memories, teach it a useful craft, and make a future for it as well as a past.

"This is the good girls' room," said the Superintendent, opening a door into a tidy little square room neatly put up in order, and vacant. "She is just gone to a situation; she learned her work nicely while she was with us. This is the naughty girls' room," she continued, showing us another equally pleasant, with a neat little bed, and a cheerful wide view over the apple trees. "The naughty girls, alas! are always with us, and are more difficult to place than the good. Six months' training is supposed to be sufficient to change the one into the other; at all events, it is long enough to teach them all to do laundry work—they take to it very kindly—and scrub, and starch, and rinse, and iron from winter time to summer, fulfilling their appointed task in the economy of the world."

They had all been up very early the morning I saw them, preparing for one of the festivals of the Church. On these occasions the neighbouring rector, the curate, the choristers, all come out resplendent in dazzling white robes, and the little girls peep from their places and wonder which particular surplice is their own handiwork, which is their own special saint out of the great white assemblage round the Communion-table. It is affecting to think of our little scrubs preparing Easter splendours and ceremonial; and meanwhile, as we have said, let us hope our little washerwomen themselves are being starched into shape and washed and smoothed into order.

The Superintendent led the way to the pretty old drawing-room, with the arched windows, where some stately lady had perhaps once lived, and looked out across the fields towards the river; now the yellow winter light shone in upon the heads of the busy girls as they bent over their ironing boards. A stove was heating the irons in the centre of the room, and the floating trophies of their day's work hung across the room from long lines. Down below again were wash-houses, and cheerful mermaids perched upon planks in a floating sea were singing at their work.

With all the dreary things there are to think about, it is as well to have some bright places to turn to, and of these surely none are more cheering to melancholy souls bemoaning the darkness of humanity than the gas becks and beacons that are flaring cheerfully and lighting up the hours of hard-worked, scant-paid little toilers. I have no room here to enumerate the various useful busy undertakings and admirable suggestions and enterprises which have been started of late, but I cannot refrain from here mentioning (quite apart from the Association, but closely connected with it in warm and true sympathy with those it concerns) a most successful club or guild for working girls, which was started some little time ago by the Hon. Miss Stanley, in Soho.

The lights are bright, the big room is made warm and ready, the girls come in after their ten hours' and twelve hours' work. There are books for them and papers; there is companionship and a pleasant hour after the long day's grind. There are classes to attend if they wish it. The working girls themselves thoroughly like the place, and enjoy coming to it, and willingly pay twopence a week out of their scant earnings for the club membership; they chatter and sing and laugh as girls should do. One lady or another attends regularly. They are made at home, welcomed warmly to good wholesome things, and kept out of the temptations of the streets. "Will Miss Smith favour the company with a song?" Miss Smith, blushing and laughing, stands up and sings a ditty as merrily as some bird might sing it to its small brown companions in a woodland glade.

There is no great machinery about this, no special appeals and protestations any more than in the working of the society about which I have now been writing. I am told that as the society extends its operations it finds more and more difficulty in meeting the necessary expenses

of its work. It is to be hoped that, with the help of many who are kindly disposed, neither help in money nor in good services may be found to fail. Two thousand a year does not seem so very large a sum to count upon when it is to be spent to such good purpose and with so much common sense, and common sense seems on the whole to be one of the most uncommon and most valuable of qualities, and far beyond gold. It means all sorts of things—unselfishness, modesty, constancy, patience and hopefulness, a sense of duty in the place of vague and passionate impulse, and intelligent sympathy shown by quiet and repeated good offices, which will bear more and more fruit in good time.

The Sleeper.

I.

THE fire is in a steadfast glow,
 The curtains drawn against the night;
 Upon the red couch soft and low
 Between the fire and lamp alight
 She rests half-sitting, half-reclining,
 Encompassed by the cosy shining,
 Her ruby dress with lace trimmed white.

II.

Her left hand shades her drooping eyes
 Against the fervour of the fire •
 The right upon her cincture lies
 In languid grace beyond desire,
 A lily fallen among roses;
 So placidly her form reposes,
 It scarcely seemeth to respire.

III.

She is not surely all awake,
 As yet she is not all asleep;
 The eyes with lids half open take
 A startled deprecating peep
 Of quivering drowsiness, then slowly
 The lids sink back, before she wholly
 Resigns herself to slumber deep.

IV.

The side-neck gleams so pure beneath
 The underfringe of gossamer,
 The tendrils of whose faery wreath
 The softest sigh suppressed would stir.
 The little pink-shell ear-rim flushes
 With her young blood's translucent blushes,
 Nestling in tresses warm as fur.

V.

The contour of her cheek and chin
Is curved in one delicious line,
Pure as a vase of porcelain thin
Through which a tender light may shine;
Her brow and blue-veined temple gleaming
Beneath the dusk of hair back-streaming
Are as a virgin's marble shrine.

VI.

The ear is burning crimson fire,
The flush is brightening on the face,
The lips are parting to suspire,
The hair grows restless in its place
As if itself new tangles wreathing,
The bosom with her deeper breathing
Swells and subsides with ravishing grace.

VII.

The hand slides softly to caress,
Unconscious, that fine-pencilled curve
"Her lip's contour and downiness,"
Unbending with a sweet reserve;
A tender darkness that abashes
Steals out beneath the long dark lashes,
Whose sightless eyes make eyesight swerve.

VIII.

The hand on chin and throat downslips,
Then softly, softly on her breast;
A dream comes fluttering o'er the lips,
And stirs the eyelids in their rest,
And makes their undershadows quiver,
And like a ripple on a river
Glides through her breathing manifest.

IX.

I feel an awe to read this dream
So clearly written in her smile;
A pleasant not a passionate theme,
A little love, a little guile;

I fear lest she should speak, revealing
The secret of some maiden feeling
I have no right to hear the while.

X.

The dream has passed without a word
Of all that hovered finely traced;
The hand has slipped down, gently stirred
To join the other at her waist;
Her breath from that light agitation
Has settled to its slow pulsation;
She is by deep sleep re-embraced.

XI.

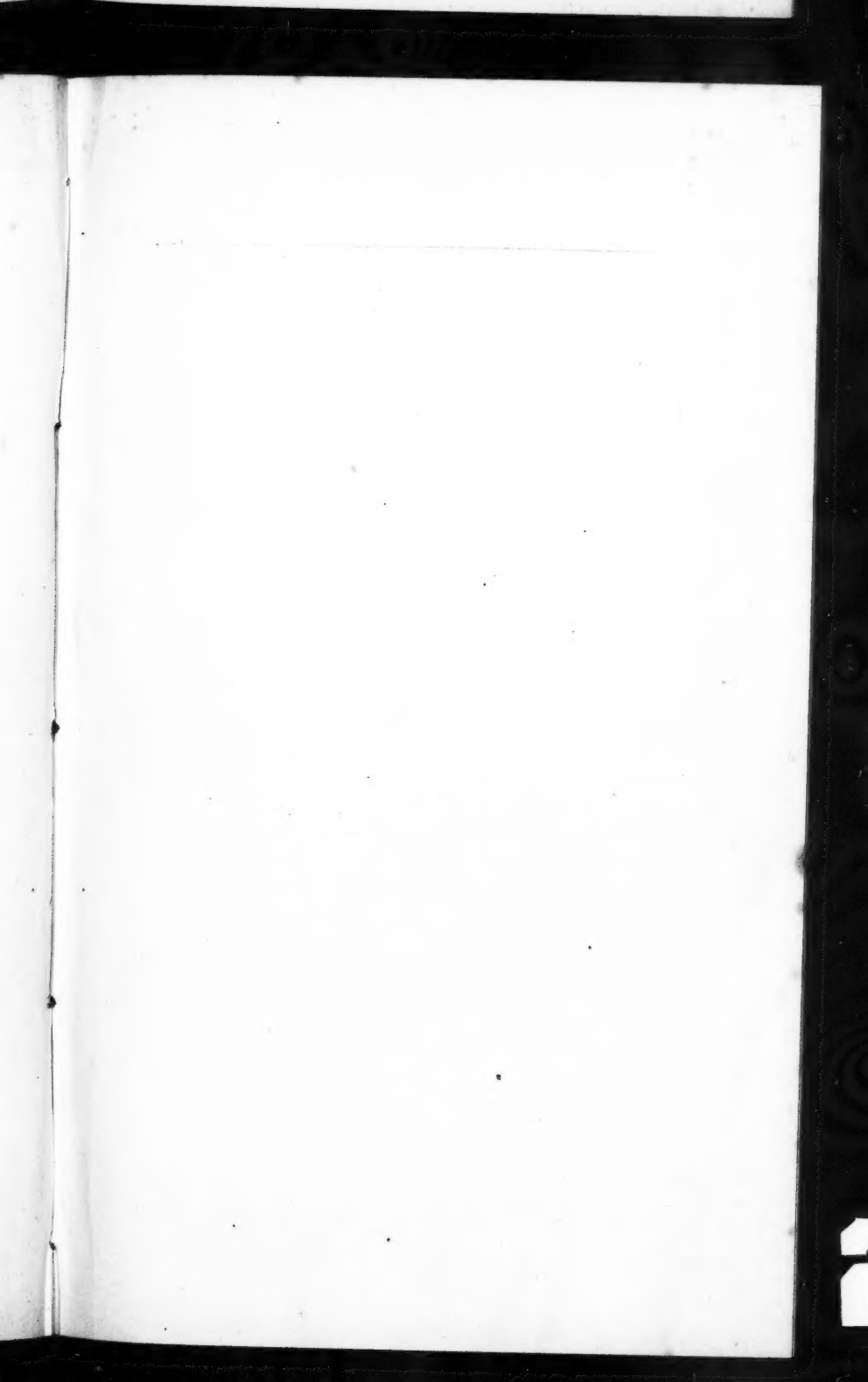
Deep sleep, so holy in its calm,
So helpless, yet so awful too;
Whose silence sheds as sweet a balm
As ever sweetest voice could do;
Whose tranced eyes, unseen, unseeing,
Shadowed by pure love, thrill our being
With tender yearnings through and through.

XII.

Sweet sleep; no hope, no fear, no strife;
The solemn sanctity of death,
With all the loveliest bloom of life;
Eternal peace in mortal breath:
Pure sleep, from which she will awaken
Refreshed as one who hath partaken
New strength, new hope, new love, new faith.

January 1882.

JAMES THOMSON.





HE STOOPED TO GATHER THEM.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER III.

SHADOWS AND A GHOST.



MRS. EASTWOOD'S hopes with regard to the weather were not destined to be fulfilled. The next day was mild and grey, with persistent, softly-dropping showers which kept all the party indoors. "Better to-day than to-morrow," said Charley, who had fixed Friday for Effie and himself to visit some friends at Brookfield. Good-tempered as he was, it vexed him to see his holiday melting away in these soft spring rains, when there were so many walks he would have liked to take with

Rachel. Nor could he find much occupation indoors. When he had done with the newspaper, he was reduced to studying the sky from the front and back of the house alternately, and strolling in and out of the rooms to see what other people were doing. "Oh, here's Charley!" said Fanny on one of the occasions. "Now please don't tease Fido—he has just gone to sleep on his cushion, poor dear!"

"I tease Fido!—what next?" said Eastwood. "I'm sure you tease him much more than I do—you are always washing the miserable little beast, and combing him, and fussing after him, and putting ribbons round his neck—only he hasn't got any neck, he's so fat."

"Well, I know you do tease him, and he doesn't like you," Fanny replied as she threaded her needle. "Now, Effie, doesn't he tease him?"

"Not very often, I think," said Effie. "Only now and then. You're a nice, kind boy, Charley dear, but you are very cruel on a wet day."

Rachel looked up from her book. "At that rate you'll be something terrible if this rain goes on," she remarked.

"Shan't I?" said Charley. "I should think the effect would be permanent." He meditated a little. "Lucky I wasn't one of Noah's sons—fancy me shut up in the ark with all that live stock! But you needn't trouble yourselves, you two; I'm never going to tease a dog again."

"I'm very glad to hear it," said Fanny.

"Never again," Charley repeated in a tone of regret. "I'm a reformed character."

"What's the cause of the reformation?"

"Oh, I saw the error of my ways a day or two ago," he replied. "I don't know about cats—you had better keep that kitten out of my way, Effie. But I'm never to tease dogs any more—especially tied-up ones. I'm not sure that a mad bull-dog, loose, would come under this rule; perhaps I might be allowed to amuse myself with that." He turned to Miss Conway. "What do you think?"

"I should think perhaps you might—on a wet day."

"Oh, yes, on a wet day, of course." He stood with his hands in his pockets, looking down. But he felt so strong an impulse to kick Fido, who lay, snow-white and snoring, at his feet, that he judged it prudent to fly from temptation, and went away to smoke a pipe in the porch.

The only pleasant interruption to the monotony of the day was the arrival of a messenger from the Hall. Effie happened to meet Mary in the passage, and came running into the drawing-room, where Rachel, book in hand, leaned by the window, looking out into a bower of damp greenery, and listening to the gentle falling of the rain.

"Look!" cried Effie, "look what lovely flowers Mr. Lauriston has sent me!"

Rachel rushed to see them. "Oh, how beautiful! How very beautiful! That's because of your song last night, Effie!"

"It's worth while singing songs, then," said the girl coolly, as she laid her treasures out one by one. "Oh, aren't they sweet?" she exclaimed, stooping over the delicate blossoms. "Rachel, weren't we silly to go hunting for wild flowers yesterday?"

"They are pretty, too," said Miss Conway, "only they faded so."

"But not pretty like these." She stood looking at the tender waxen petals on their background of dusky green cloth. "Rich people have all the nice things," she said with a sigh. "He never goes out and picks a bunch of rubbish out of the hedges."

"Mr. Lauriston? No, I don't suppose he does."

"No, and Mrs. Lauriston didn't, I know," said Effie with a little nod. "Not when she could have all the flowers she wanted. She made believe she liked them, I suppose, when she was a shepherdess. So would I make believe I liked them now and then if I had the others every day."

"Effie, we heard more than once how charming wild flowers were, when we went out yesterday."

"That was because I couldn't get any others. Let's turn out those shabby old things of Fanny's, and put these beauties in." Effie sighed again as she began to arrange them, and felt that Fate was very cruel to her. She remembered the time when she could please Mr. Lauriston without an effort, when she might sit on his knee, and play with his watchguard, and turn the ring on his finger, and kiss him, instead of having to keep up the conversation and behave like a young lady. She did not particularly wish for any alteration in herself, but she thought that Mr. Lauriston might be changed in many respects with advantage. Why wasn't he easy to talk to, like Charley, or like ——? Effie had had more than one harmless little flirtation already, and could have supplied a name or two to fill up the blank.

She felt this cruelty of Fate still more that evening when Mr. Lauriston sent his carriage to fetch them. As they rolled easily and swiftly through the park, Effie remembered what miles and miles her little feet had trudged through country lanes, and recalled her experience of cab and omnibus in London streets. For the time the hothouse flowers were half forgotten, and the possession of a carriage became the height of felicity. Rachel meanwhile sat opposite, and looked with obedient interest at every view which Mrs. Eastwood pointed out. "You don't see it to advantage," said the latter regretfully. But Miss Conway liked the green dimness of the judiciously designed plantations, and the softened outlines of the irregular swells, as she saw them first that evening through a thin veil of rain. She was almost sorry when they arrived at the Hall, where Effie, alighting, added two tall footmen to her dream of joy.

Mr. Lauriston had invited Mr. Brand, the curate, to meet them. Rachel had already seen him in church—a dark, rather handsome man, with a narrow forehead and a determined mouth. The young ladies of the parish worshipped him, and he accepted their adoration with unaffected ease as a matter of course. Even before they went to dinner he began to talk of parish matters to Fanny and Effie, while Mrs. Eastwood monopolised Mr. Lauriston, and boldly questioned him about the little boy.

"He is very well, thank you," was the reply. "No, I never see him in the evening—don't such young people go to bed before this time?"

Well, yes, Mrs. Eastwood had no doubt that he would be in bed. She was glad to hear he was well.

"Yes," Mr. Lauriston repeated, "he is very well. Not a very strong child, they tell me, but he never seems to be ill."

"A great favourite, of course?" she said with a beaming smile, though in fact she had her doubts. "I daresay his papa spoils him, if the truth were known."

"I believe I'm not bound to criminate myself, am I?" he replied.

"I suppose he goes with you to-morrow?" she said, returning to the charge. "Or does he stay on at the Hall while you are away?"

"Oh, no—my sisters will take him. I'm a rolling stone, you know."

"Your sisters? They have not been to Redlands for a long while, I think? I hope they are well—Miss Mary especially."

Mr. Lauriston smiled. "Not Miss Mary now—you did not know that she married a year and a half ago," he said, as he offered her his arm, and they went to dinner. He foiled most of her questions, and she was obliged to be satisfied with learning that Miss Mary Lauriston was Mrs. Clarke, and, vaguely, that she had gone to America with her husband. "Henrietta and Eliza will take the child; they have more room than they want in their house," he said.

Miss Conway was hardly as much amused during dinner as she had been the day before. She sat by Mr. Lauriston (for he had asked Mrs. Eastwood to take the head of the table, which she did with much dignity), but Mr. Brand led the conversation to local matters which she did not understand, and Charley kept up a dropping fire of unconnected remarks. She found it difficult to talk to Charley with Mr. Lauriston at her side, and she hardly acknowledged to herself that she would have liked to talk to Mr. Lauriston. "Do you dine in this great room when you are quite alone?" she asked him once when the question was covered by the general conversation.

"Always," he said. "You think it dreary?"

"I don't know. I don't think I should like the shadows in all the corners if I were alone."

"No? They are very good company when you are used to them. I daresay many people would call it dreary; but do you know, Miss Conway, I think I fancied you would like my room."

She shook her head. "Not if I were by myself. I would have a little room and light it well."

"It would be difficult to light this"—he began, when Mr. Brand was heard saying,

"We have been talking about the possibility of getting a cottage for mission-work, and a night-school, in Brook Lane, Mr. Lauriston. Something ought to be done there. Can't you help us?"

He answered; but Rachel, who knew nothing of Brook Lane, took advantage of a momentary silence on Charley's part to glance round the room, and picture to herself the little island of light in the dusk, with Mr. Lauriston sitting there all alone. She could see it vividly enough, till all at once the thought of his dead wife came into it, and the girl sat with drooping eyelids, wondering what those two had looked like in the lamplight together, and whether that beautiful memory lingered in the shadows that Mr. Lauriston found good company. Did he think of her in those lonely evenings, or not? Rachel could have believed either

answer to her question. It was absurd—she knew it was perfectly absurd—he was only a gentlemanly, well-dressed man, with quiet manners and a gentle voice, who had just refilled his glass as he sat by her side, and was pushing the decanter to Mr. Brand, yet it seemed to her as if in some way he belonged to the shadow of which he had spoken.

Mrs. Eastwood was eager to tell her girls the news she had learned from their host, and to exclaim over it with them. "Only think," she said, when they had left the gentlemen to their wine and were safe in the drawing-room, "Mary Lauriston is married! Fanny, you must remember Mary?"

"Oh, I remember them all. Mary was the fair one—she was younger than the others."

"But she was older than Mr. Lauriston," said Effie scornfully. She must be ever so old now."

"Well, she is about five or six and forty," Mrs. Eastwood allowed. "Still, she was the youngest of the three, and much the best-looking. I think Adam Lauriston was fond of her in his own way, and I always thought she might have got on all right with her stepmother if it hadn't been for the others. But if ever there were a couple of old cats—they were enough to make mischief with anybody!"

"I remember them," said Effie. "I remember their coming once when I was quite little and walking round the garden with papa."

"Well, even he didn't like them!" Mrs. Eastwood exclaimed triumphantly, "though we were all saints and angels according to your papa. And now Adam Lauriston is going to send that poor child to live with them! I shouldn't have wondered if Mary had been there—but to send a child to those two old maids!"

"Poor little wretch!" said Fanny.

"And Mary married more than a year! I wonder I never heard of it. I shouldn't be much surprised," Mrs. Eastwood remarked sagely, "if they weren't pleased with the marriage for some reason."

"Perhaps Miss Henrietta thought he ought to have asked the eldest first," said Effie. "I say, Rachel, let's go round the room and look at the pictures and things while we are by ourselves. I never had the chance before."

The gentlemen did not stay very long in the dining-room. It would have been difficult to find three men who had less in common, and, in spite of Mr. Lauriston's best endeavours, the conversation flagged. He tried politics, but without success. Charley was a Conservative, and a strong partisan. It was evident to Charley that all who differed from him were not only blind, but wilfully blind, to the truth. It was neither very easy nor very profitable to discuss political questions with him, but at least in so doing you knew what you might expect. Now Mr. Brand tested all statesmen by their Church principles—that is, by their opinions concerning vestments and candles—and in his talk with

young Eastwood this classification led to an occasional agreement which was far more irritating than any discord. That was the last attempt at conversation, and, after its failure, they adjourned to the drawing-room. Mr. Lauriston, pausing on the threshold to let his guests precede him, looked across the room at the girls who had just completed their tour of inspection. Effie had thrown herself into a stately old-fashioned arm-chair, a chair which seemed to proclaim itself the master's seat. The childish little figure was half lost in its depths; but the light gleamed on the soft white folds of her dress, and on her bright face as she leaned forward, speaking to her friend. Mr. Lauriston, however, hardly noticed Effie. He looked at Miss Conway who stood on the hearth-rug, erect and slender, idly fanning herself with a fan of peacock feathers which she had picked up. It was like a picture, he thought—the girl's head with the golden-brown hair drawn back and wound in a soft, shining knot, the dark eyes, the delicately tinted face, against the carved white marble of the great chimney-piece. He saw it all in one quick glance, for Rachel looked round when she heard them coming, and paused, with the fan drooping in her hand. Eastwood went straight up to her, and Mr. Lauriston stood discreetly aside.

His turn came a little later, however, while Mr. Brand was turning over a portfolio of photographs, and talking to Fanny and Effie. (If Miss Conway had been willing, the curate would very readily have added her to his listeners, experience having given him confidence in dealing with numbers.) On the outskirts of the little group sat Mrs. Eastwood, inspecting a photograph through her gold eye-glass from time to time, with gentle little nods of which she was happily unconscious. Charley, as he sat near Rachel, rested an elbow on the table, and turned the leaves of the last *Punch*. Apparently his occasional remarks did not engross all her attention, for she raised her eyes to Mr. Lauriston, who had been answering a question about one of the photographs, and was turning away. "We were looking at your pictures before you came in—Effie and I," she said.

He came directly and took a chair by her side. "You couldn't see much of them by this light, I'm afraid. I'm very unlucky, Miss Conway; there are some things I should like to show you, and I haven't the chance."

"Thank you, you are very kind. I should have been very pleased."

"I have travelled a good deal," he went on, "and one picks up things—treasures one thinks them. And to find some one else who will think so too—or successfully make believe to think so—is one of the greatest pleasures I know. I doubt you wouldn't make believe, Miss Conway, but there is the other possibility."

"I hope I wouldn't make believe," she said with a smile. "But I can't say; I might try, perhaps."

"It would be very kind, you know. But I don't think you would.

You didn't pretend to like my gloomy rooms. If I had only known, I would have bought up all the candles in Redlands, and lighted them in your honour."

"Perhaps it was just as well you didn't know. And I only said I didn't like shadows when I was alone. Your house is too big, Mr. Lauriston, and it sounds hollow. There is room for too many shadows in it; but I don't mind them to-night, as I am not alone."

There was a pause. "Do you like ghosts? I have a ghost belonging to me," said Mr. Lauriston. "Did you know that?"

She shook her head. "It won't do, I won't be frightened. People don't have ghosts in elegant modern mansions. I don't believe in it."

"Ah, but my ghost is not to be disposed of in that summary fashion. It lives out of doors."

"In the park, then?"

"No, in the garden, in a wide grassy walk between two high yew hedges."

"Is it dreadful to look at?"

"Not at all. At least I hope not, for the credit of the family, since it is my great-great-grandmother. She comes hurrying down the middle of the walk, and looks backward over her shoulder as she comes."

"Did you ever see her, Mr. Lauriston?"

"Never; and never knew any one who did."

"It seems to me," said Rachel with a smile, "that this is only the ghost of a ghost story."

"So much the better," said Lauriston. "That is the charm of it. It keeps out of the way, and cannot be explained into something prosaic. I hate a clumsy, meaningless ghost; but this story of mine is just a shadowy expression of the tradition that the walk was once haunted by a most miserable woman."

Rachel looked at him with startled eyes. "Why did she haunt it? Did she do anything dreadful?"

"Nobody knows that she did anything at all."

"Mr. Lauriston, you and your story are very mysterious."

"Shall I explain?" he said. "But mind, I vouch for nothing. This—what shall I say?—this distant grandmother of mine had a boy of whom she was passionately fond. He was not the heir, for her husband was the second son, and the elder brother had left a little child, younger than her own. There is a deep pond in the garden close to the end of this walk I told you of, and one day the little fellow fell into it and was drowned. The nurse who ought to have been with him heard him scream, and hurried to him by the nearest way, (which was not the yew walk) but she had some distance to go, and was too late. It was all simple enough, and there was nothing to connect my great-great-grandmother with it in the slightest degree."

"No," said Rachel wonderingly.

"But after that time, according to the story, her people noticed that

she was changed. She walked continually in the yew walk, but never turned the corner by the pond. Naturally they said that she had been there the day the child was drowned, and might have saved him."

"Do you suppose she *was* there?"

"I can't say," he answered with a smile. "It sounds unpleasantly probable."

"But it is horrible!" said Miss Conway. "I don't like your story at all, Mr. Lauriston. I can fancy her walking there, and never daring to look round the corner, because she would not look that one moment!" There was a pause. "And what became of the boy for whose sake she did it? Did he die?"

"He died," said Mr. Lauriston gravely, "at the age of eighty-three."

"What,—he lived? But was he happy? was he fortunate?"

"He married a beautiful heiress, was universally respected, paid off most of the mortgages, and left the estate to his grandson, my uncle. You seem disappointed, Miss Conway, but it was a very good thing for the family."

"No; but I felt as if it ought not to end so," she answered. "I felt as if she ought to fail, somehow, and instead of that she succeeded after all."

"Well, if she had failed, that would have been tragic, no doubt, but this may have been more tragic still. Failure leaves you your ideal; you can think, 'If it had been!' But suppose you succeed and find that it was not worth while"—he shrugged his shoulders.

"I wonder whether she thought it *was* worth while," said Miss Conway.

"Assuming the truth of the story, I suspect not."

"I don't see why you think not."

"Well, from the nature of things in general—will that do? If it will not do, I will remind you that the people who knew her best thought not, or they would not have seen her haunting the yew walk."

Charles Eastwood, who had committed himself to the prediction that Mr. Lauriston and Miss Conway would get on together, was very well content to hear the quick interchange of speech going on at his elbow. He had been listening, too, as he glanced at his paper, and of course he knew what it was all about. They were talking about ghosts. Now he saw the *Field* lying at a little distance on the table, and pushed his chair rather further to reach it. Rachel turned her head, looked at him, and there was a brief pause before she spoke again.

"But, Mr. Lauriston, perhaps she loved him so much that she thought it was worth while in spite of all her suffering."

"Again I think not, Miss Conway."

"Why not?"

"If she could have been capable of such love as that she would have been brave enough to face the consequences. Afraid of that pool!

Why she would have played ducks and drakes across it, unless"—Mr. Lauriston suddenly recollected himself—"unless she thought that perhaps people might consider it improper. No, it was an impulse, not a great passion. And she was thinking of herself, not of her boy, when she haunted the yew walk. Don't you agree with me?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Perhaps. I don't pretend to be a judge."

"Why not? We all know how women can sacrifice themselves for their children, or their lovers. Don't you think the love might deaden the pain? One would be sorry to suppose they always regretted it," said Mr. Lauriston drily.

"I didn't mean that," was her hurried reply, while the colour came into her face. "I only meant that I was not romantic; I don't know, I am sure, whether I should be capable of a great passion or self-sacrifice under any circumstances—most likely not; and so I could not pretend to decide what a woman might do or feel. That was all I meant."

"I understand. You must allow me to draw my own conclusion from your doubt."

She looked curiously at him. "Tell me what it is, Mr. Lauriston."

He smiled. "Well, since you ask me, if I may say so, I conclude that there is a possibility that you *are* capable."

"I don't see why—you don't know me well enough to tell," she said, while her colour deepened.

"I never meant to imply that I did know you well enough to tell. I was only judging by a general rule. If a woman is certain that she is capable of a great passion," said Mr. Lauriston lightly, "one suspects that she bases her certainty on half a dozen lesser ones. If she doubts—one may at least doubt too."

She laughed, a little uneasily. "Well, I don't want to prove my capability," she said, half to herself. Mr. Lauriston arched his brows, but did not speak. "I don't," she repeated. "If a good fairy could give me my wish, I would choose to be always quiet, and peaceful, and safe, and commonplace—yes, I would choose to be commonplace."

Mr. Lauriston took the feather fan which lay idly in her lap, and turned it in his hands. "It is a curious wish," he said. "But I don't think it sounds unreasonable. I should say there could be hardly any difficulty about bestowing that boon on one more."

"But I mean it—I mean it, really. I'm not ambitious. I hope and trust that I am just fit to lead a commonplace life like my neighbours."

"You think that? Well, if so—pardon me, Miss Conway—your looks belie you."

"So much the worse for my looks!" she answered hotly. "I'm very sorry, but I do hope it."

"So much the worse! What next?" said Mr. Lauriston. "First I am to believe that you wish to be commonplace. Well, it is an effort, but I consider faith my strong point. But this is too much. I am to

believe that a woman not only wishes to be commonplace—let that pass—but to *look* commonplace! Forgive me, but I can't."

He smiled as he said it, and Rachel smiled too, and answered honestly, "Well, I'm not quite sure about the looks myself. We won't say anything more about them, please."

"Are you sure of the rest?"

"Yes!" She turned her head and met his eyes. "Oh, you may laugh; I know you think I am talking nonsense, but it is true."

Mr. Lauriston slightly bent his head in token of acquiescence. "So be it," he said. "Must I wish you success in the attainment of your ideal?" It might be a mere accident, but he fixed his eyes as he spoke on Mrs. Eastwood, who was just getting the gold eye-glass into position to examine Salisbury Cathedral.

"Looking east, mamma; but you've got it sideways," said Fanny.

Miss Conway looked defiantly at Mr. Lauriston. "No, I won't trouble you for your good wishes," she said.

"Thank you. They would be rather grudgingly given, I'm afraid."

There was a pause. She held out her hand for the fan, which he resigned. "Is it—is it very strange to wish not to be peculiar in any way?" she said presently. "Don't you think people are happier so?"

"It is difficult to put happiness into figures and add it up," said Mr. Lauriston. "How many days of a comfortable life will equal a moment of rapture?"

The fan moved slowly to and fro, and Miss Conway did not attempt an answer. "I suppose your great-great-grandmother wasn't commonplace," she said after a time. "And she wasn't happy. People whose ghosts walk can't be quite commonplace, I think."

Mr. Lauriston smiled. "After all, I know very little about my great-great-grandmother. The whole story, you perceive, rests on nothing more than the facts that she walked in that particular path, and that her spirits were not good. Still I admit that she was not altogether commonplace. But I didn't propose her as an ideal; in fact I think we decided that she was weak."

"Yes, I know," said Miss Conway absently; and for a few moments the two seemed to be pursuing their different trains of thought. Mr. Lauriston spoke first in a low voice.

"Suppose, now, the story I told you was true, I don't mean the apparition—that doesn't matter—but that lifelong dread and horror of hers; doesn't it seem strange that it should fade away to a faint uncertain shadow—oh, a human shadow, I grant you," for Miss Conway had made a quick gesture of dissent, "and we can't tell whether there is anything real behind it or not?"

"I should like to know that there was not," she said.

"Well, very likely there was not, and you have wasted your pity on a shadow. But it seems strange that we cannot be sure. Don't you feel that, more or less, with all old stories? Loves and hates which were

all fire, and madness, and blood, and nothing left but a little shadowy sentiment hovering about old houses."

Charley Eastwood glanced over his shoulder at his neighbours. In spite of his reading he had listened to their conversation. They were still talking about ghosts. Being an observant young man, he noted the fact that Rachel looked grave and preoccupied, and he hoped that she had not got a headache. As he pushed his paper away, the heading to a paragraph caught his eye, and he stopped to read it.

"She thought the whole world was miserable, and it was only she herself who was changed," said the girl.

"True; but you are taking this grandmother of mine much too seriously, Miss Conway. I could almost fancy that you had been in the yew walk, and seen her with your own eyes."

She looked at him. "Do you tell everybody about her, Mr. Lauriston?"

He shook his head, meeting her look with a smile. "There, that will do," he said, after a pause. "Shall we have some music, and drive the ghost away? I haven't forgot your flattering speech to me last night, but I'm not quite sure that I can play the part of David. I shouldn't look the character, should I?" said Mr. Lauriston with a laugh. "'Ruddy and of a fair countenance'—Eastwood is our man. We'll make him begin, and my turn shall come afterwards."

And two minutes later Charley was singing, and Mr. Brand had come softly across the room with a couple of photographs, to ask Miss Conway if she had ever seen Furness Abbey.

When Mr. Lauriston had said goodbye to his guests that evening he came back to the drawing-room. Standing on the hearthrug he surveyed the photographs strewn over the table, the piano with its scattered sheets of music, the chairs that stood about with a queer meaning in their disarray. There was the group that suggested the Eastwoods worshipping the curate; that other, somewhat apart, which brought back Charley, a little bored, perhaps, and conscious that he had got through an unusual amount of reading; and here was one with something in its position that instantly recalled the fluent ease with which Mr. Brand discoursed of Furness Abbey. Mr. Lauriston, softly whistling to himself, stepped forward, and picked up the feather fan which lay where Rachel Conway had left it.

The tune grew fainter and died. He looked round the room. "So—it is too big, and dreary, and full of shadows. Well, perhaps it is. I suppose Eastwood will take a neat little suburban villa somewhere, and they will have the curtains drawn, and the gas lighted, when he comes home from the office. And Mrs. Charles Eastwood will do her best to think of nothing outside that little house, and Charley will criticise her dress, and her manners, whenever he feels inclined, and the girls will go and stay there, and old Mrs. Eastwood will give her good advice about the servants and the furniture. Ah! by the way, the little

drawing-room will be full of hideous wedding presents. And sometimes they will have a few friends to dinner, or some musical fellow clerk of Charley's, who sings comic songs, will drop in. And she thinks she can live that life and be happy! Is the girl mad? And what will be the end of it?"

He stood for a moment, pursuing the thought which seemed to grow more distasteful as he viewed it more clearly. Then he threw down the fan. "Charles Eastwood's wife! Well, it's no business of mine, but I wish to heaven I had never seen her."

CHAPTER IV.

AN AFTERNOON IN REDLANDS PARK.

*"La mélancolie,
Cette fleur du Nord et d'un ciel souffrant,
Dont le froid calice, inondé de pluie,
S'exhale en poison."*

RACHEL came down on Friday morning in a dreamy mood, which found no satisfactory response from the faces round her. Charley had a faint perception of a far-away look in her eyes, and he called attention to the fact, causing Fanny to suggest that she was thinking of Mr. Lauriston. Miss Conway met this remark with a lofty silence, which might be taken as jest or earnest. In point of fact she was very much displeased. And yet she was thinking of Mr. Lauriston.

It had been almost a relief to her to come away from Redlands Hall the night before. The great lonely house had cast a shadow over her, Mr. Lauriston had perplexed her, and the thought of his young wife, so early lost, had saddened her through its very vagueness. The woman in his story, with her vain remorse, had pressed too closely on Rachel's excited imagination. It seemed as if, after long years of silence, finding some one who could understand her pain, she had poured a share of her guilty anguish into a pure soul. Rachel had been glad to watch Effie's pretty little head nodding sleepily in the dim light as they drove home, and Charley's pleasant cheery voice had been a welcome sound. The clasp of his strong hand as he said goodnight had been effectual to banish the lingering pressure with which Mr. Lauriston bade her farewell, wondering, with a curious expression in his eyes, how and when they would meet again. That touch had been with her all the way, till Charley held her hand, and told her that she looked tired, and must sleep well.

But things were altered with the morning. She had slept, and the visionary fancies of the night before were too hopelessly worsted by the daylight to be any longer formidable. Indeed, they were slipping away so fast that Rachel found herself regretting them, and would willingly

have called them back, and given them a little shelter. But where? The aggressive daylight filled every corner of the Eastwoods' house. If it had even been sunshine it would have brought its shadows with it; but the sky was cloudy, and the pale diffused light shed a common-place clearness over all the world.

And Mr. Lauriston? Rachel could not help wondering what effect the daylight would have on him. If she could see him that morning, would he seem different, like everything else? She tried to imagine him taking his ticket, and starting off to town, as anybody might do, and in the effort she realised that he was gone, and that life seemed smaller, and speech more contracted, in his absence.

"I suppose he will drive past here," said Mrs. Eastwood, breaking strangely into the girl's thoughts.

"Lauriston? Oh, he's gone before now," Charley replied, looking up from his paper. "He always drives to the station by Raymond's End."

Miss Conway turned away her eyes indifferently. "Surely that is further than the other way, isn't it?" said his mother.

"A little, perhaps. But there isn't a quarter of a mile's difference between them, and it's a better road, you know—not so much up and down. Still I dare say he'd have come this way if he'd known you wished it."

"Well, it wouldn't really have been any good, but I must own I should have liked just a glimpse of the child," said Mrs. Eastwood.

"The child!" Charley burst out laughing. "What on earth did you want to see the child for? Just like other babies, I suppose, especially driving by at the pace Lauriston's horses mostly go."

"Well, I said it wouldn't be any good. Still—you didn't see him at all, did you?"

"No—only heard him howl, as I told you. The little beggar has tolerable lungs, I should say, if that interests you."

"I *cannot* think how he can send him to those two old maids," said Mrs. Eastwood, whose surprise could bear several such repetitions before losing the keenness of its edge. "I cannot understand it!"

"Well, it's his own look-out. And I see no particular objection so long as he doesn't want to send me. Is Effie getting ready for this precious Brookfield expedition of ours, does anybody know?"

Rachel was sorry when Charley and Effie drove off, Effie waving her a bright farewell, and Charley looking back with an easy disregard of the old horse from the "Falcon." His carelessness mattered the less, as that sagacious animal was accustomed to a variety of incapable drivers. And though it did young Eastwood some injustice—not understanding the peculiar circumstances of the case—it turned safely into the Brookfield road, which was the important thing, and started off at what it considered a suitable pace. "I do hope Charley will be careful," said Mrs. Eastwood, as she and Rachel went back into the house.

Fanny was happy in the prospect of a morning's dressmaking. She

had cleared the table in readiness for cutting out, and she was impatiently waiting, with a fashion-book in her hand, to consult Rachel about the pattern of a trimming. Rachel tried to throw herself heart and soul into the work, and she partly succeeded. But even while she considered what style was best adapted for Fanny's neat, plump figure, and quite agreed with Mrs. Eastwood that the material was very pretty, and likely to wear well, and not expensive—no, not at all expensive—she was conscious of an underlying life of fancy in her brain. The world was full of wonders, and splendours, and shadows—was it not? At least it had seemed so the night before—full of doubts and fears, of dreams high as heaven and deep as hell. And meanwhile she measured and pinned. “You will get it out of that, I am sure, and then it will come all right for cutting on the cross; of course those folds must be cut on the cross,” she said to Fanny, who stood by with a great pair of scissors, eager to begin. The work progressed rapidly, yet they were surprised when one o'clock came and found them absorbed in it. However, as Fanny remarked, the cutting out was just finished, and she could do up some of the seams that afternoon in the machine. She made up her mind on a question of buttons, between the meat and pudding at their early dinner, but hesitated about fringe till the cloth was taken away. Miss Conway never failed to show an intelligent interest in these matters, though it occurred to her once to wonder what Mr. Lauriston's great-great-grandmother did when she wanted a new gown. “I suppose she chose the colour she liked best, in spite of her misery,” the girl thought to herself, “and settled what buttons she would have—like Fanny!”

“You look pale,” said Mrs. Eastwood; “you mustn't stay indoors all day. I don't suppose Fanny will leave her work”—Fanny shook her head—“but you might walk into the village with me, and while I call on Mrs. Wilkinson you could go a little way by yourself.”

Rachel readily assented. She was glad to be in the open air, though they talked of Fanny's dress till they reached Mrs. Wilkinson's door. But she rejoiced still more when she found herself alone and free, walking with swift steps, she hardly heeded where. It was one of those spring days when the damp soft air is like the breath of a hothouse, smelling of earth and leaves. Every bud was opening, all life quickening, under the low, grey sky. It was so sunless and still that it would have been melancholy, if the year had not been so young, and it seemed to Rachel, as she walked, as if the birds were singing through a strange and silent dream. She let her fancy wander where it would; she was content to listen to the ever flowing stream of song, yet not even that with too much earnestness, lest a thought should break the spell. She liked to be alone, going her way between the white-blossomed hedges, with her head high, as if the often trodden country lane were a pathway leading into an unknown world.

Other steps, as light and quick as if they were echoes of her own, were drawing near. Miss Conway turned a corner of the road, came

suddenly upon a small gate leading into the park, and found herself face to face with Mr. Lauriston.

There was the briefest possible pause of surprise before he spoke. "Alone, Miss Conway?" He unfastened the gate, and came forward, holding out his hand. "What, did I startle you?"

"I thought you had gone away," she answered.

"*L'homme propose*," said Mr. Lauriston, with that slight shrug of his shoulders which was already so familiar to Rachel, "but, to finish in plain English, my sister has fallen downstairs, and is too much shaken to be able to travel to-day."

"Is she much hurt?" inquired Rachel, still confused, but prompted by an instinct of politeness.

"Only shaken; nothing serious, I think, as she hopes to meet me in town to-morrow. But when I had the telegram I decided to wait here, rather than there. And now it is your own turn to account for yourself; how come you to be wandering about alone?" said Mr. Lauriston, with a quick glance, as if he half expected to see some one else turn the corner. "Where are the rest?"

"Effie and Mr. Eastwood are gone to Brookfield for the day, Fanny is busy, and Fido is asleep. So I went into the village with Mrs. Eastwood, and left her to pay some calls, while I came a little way by myself."

"I see. And where are you going?"

"Going? Oh, nowhere."

Mr. Lauriston swung the little gate back on its hinges, and leaned against it. "You will find this the most direct route, Miss Conway."

Rachel laughed doubtfully, and looked along the lane. He followed the direction of her eyes.

"In less than three minutes that way will take you into the Bucks-mill Hill road, which, as you know, is nothing remarkable, at any rate till you get to the farm. Besides, you have been there already. Come where you have not been."

She smiled again, and this time she looked towards the park. In the grey canopy of cloud there was a spot of luminous mist, and the only gleam of sunshine which that Friday afternoon was destined to know stole softly over the face of the land, and brightened it with a yellow glow. It was like an answering smile to Rachel.

"Well?" said Mr. Lauriston, still leaning on the gate. Something of easy grace in his attitude caught the girl's eye, as he stood in the foreground of the picture, waiting her decision. "It is evident to me," he said, "that 'the good fates please' that you should be introduced to my domain in spite of your indifference, or why did they bring us together exactly at the gate? Come, Miss Conway," he went on, with a sudden change of tone; "come and see the irregular swells!"

The pathetic entreaty triumphed, though even then she paused.

"Promise me that you won't take me to that yew walk, Mr. Lauriston."

"No, no, I won't," he promised, as he held the gate for her to pass.

"Nor the pond," she said, stopping short.

"Nor the pond. And the pond and the yew walk shall be taken as including everything else of the same kind, though I don't think there is anything else? Will that do?"

"Yes," said Miss Conway gravely, "that will do. But weren't you going anywhere, Mr. Lauriston?"

"Nowhere. Our destination is precisely the same, you perceive."

Towards that destination they walked together through the warm stillness of the afternoon, from which the soft glow had not yet quite faded. Rachel found it hard to believe that it was scarcely more than half an hour since she left the hot little house which was full of the busy noise of Fanny's machine, and the smell of early dinner. In the first surprise of her meeting with Mr. Lauriston she had forgotten all about the birds; but now they were singing afresh, and filling all the pauses in her thoughts with gushes of music. There were leafy whispers overhead as they went across "shady levels, mossy fine." Between the trunks there were glimpses of the tranquil reaches of the river, and beyond that were slopes and lawns of greenest grass among the oaks and beeches. Miss Conway felt as if Fanny, working at her seam, must be miles and miles away; or rather, perhaps, some strange distance which could not be expressed in miles. And yet through it all, with a half smile, half sigh, she was conscious that she herself should go home to a meat tea.

"Why did you smile?" said Mr. Lauriston. "What were you thinking of?"

"Nothing," she answered. How could she tell him that she was thinking about her tea—why, he would suppose she was hungry!—or about Fanny's new dress? Besides, she was not really thinking of these things, and she hardly knew what made her smile.

"You are going nowhere, and thinking of nothing by the way. Well, it is exceedingly appropriate, but you seem to be in rather a negative mood this afternoon, Miss Conway."

"I don't quite know what I was thinking of," she said. "But I fancy I must have been thinking how beautiful all this is—how could one think of anything else here?"

"Oh, I am silenced," said Mr. Lauriston with a well pleased smile, and they went some little distance before he spoke again. "Come this way, and I will show you something that you will like."

She followed obediently as he led the way up a little knoll close by. "Mr. Lauriston," she said, and he turned round quickly, "is this an irregular swell?"

"Unquestionably," he replied, with extreme gravity. "Though it is rather a small specimen, there is no doubt whatever about it."

"Well, it isn't very big, certainly, but it is very nice. And what am I to see now that I am here?"

"Do you know what that is?" Mr. Lauriston inquired. She looked where he pointed, and in the distance she saw the rounded top of Bucksmill Hill against the soft grey sky. She could distinguish the roof of the farm at its foot, among the clustered orchard trees, and, looking upward for the track which they followed that night, she caught sight of a bit of it, like a scar on the hillside, just below the spot where it branched off to the purple moorland. "You would see it better if the sun were shining," said Mr. Lauriston.

"It is very pretty now." And Rachel paused, with parted lips and eager eyes, looking at it. Only three days earlier she had stood on that hill, and looked at Redlands Hall, where it lay far off in its moonlit woodland. She remembered how they had talked of Mr. Lauriston, "a little dark man with bright eyes," and how her fancy had called up a shadow to haunt the shadowy moor. And now they stood together looking at Bucksmill Hill. Charley's words came back to her so clearly that it seemed as if they had that minute been spoken, and, turning to her companion, she said with a smile, "And all that belongs to you, Mr. Lauriston!"

"Yes," he said. "It belongs to me, or—sometimes I think it is the other way, and that I belong to it."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, it seems rather absurd to talk about owning all that, when there is so little I can do with it. In what sense do I really possess the earth that is under our feet? I could cut down some trees if I liked, and leave my mark so, but even that wouldn't last for ever. And when I'm underground there'll be the grass growing, and the river flowing, and Bucksmill Hill up aloft against the sky, just the same."

"That's true," said the girl.

"And meanwhile here I am, tied to the place after a fashion."

"But you like it?"

"Oh, yes, I like it," he said with a laugh. "I'm not complaining, Miss Conway. I was only trying to make out whether I own Redlands, or Redlands owns me."

"You could sell it, I suppose?"

"I have the legal power to do so—it isn't entailed—did you mean that? But I couldn't do it. There are tenants who have held under us for many years; all the old people in the village know us. I'm not a model landlord by any means. In fact, I'm simply King Log. But, such as I am, these good folks understand me, and we get on very well. Suppose I sold the place to a cotton spinner. He might take to improving them—I don't see how I could stipulate that he shouldn't improve them—and they wouldn't like it at all. And I have an idea that I should feel as if I had deserted my post."

"I think you would. I'm afraid there's no help for it, Mr. Lauriston."

"No, I must stick to the old place till I die. Till I die," he repeated with a whimsical smile, and faced round abruptly, with his back to Bucksmill Hill. "Look there, Miss Conway; do you see that glimpse of road across there, through the trees?"

She turned and looked. "Yes; I see it."

"Well, that's the straight road to the village. That's the way my funeral will go, one of these days. Now do you understand what I mean when I say I feel as if I belonged to the estate? *You* don't know where you will be buried." He stood with his bright eyes fixed upon the bit of road, as if he saw the slowly moving blots upon its whiteness. Rachel looked too, and suddenly remembered that the last funeral procession was little more than a year before, when his wife was buried. The thought startled her, and she wondered whether he was thinking of the same thing. It seemed to her—though what did she know about him?—that it was impossible to imagine Mr. Lauriston grieving in a commonplace, customary way. She could fancy a strange intensity of sorrow on his part, or a cool indifference—anything but the honest yet not all-absorbing griefs, which are woven like black threads into ordinary lives. Miss Conway might be foolish in this fancy of hers. She was only two and twenty, a dreamer of dreams, and Mr. Lauriston was the first man she had known who looked like the possible hero of a story, for her imagination could hardly glorify Charley Eastwood to that extent. At any rate she had this fancy; and since she was thinking of a beautiful young wife, won and lost within a year, did it not follow that her companion was hiding a lifelong sorrow?

He had turned and was looking at her. "Don't you like people to talk about dying and being buried, Miss Conway? You look grave, as you looked last night when you took my ghost so seriously."

"Oh, I don't think I mind," she said, as they resumed their walk. "Everybody must die; it would be silly to be afraid to talk of that. But I'm not like you, Mr. Lauriston; I don't like talking about horrors."

"Do I talk about horrors?"

"I think you do, don't you?"

"That depends partly on your definition of horrors, perhaps."

"Well, crimes," she said. "Or—or dreadful sufferings, or"—she stopped short, glanced at him, and, as he did not speak, she made another attempt. "I think you want to know about people who are strange in any way. I think you want to study them and understand how they feel. Oh, I can't tell you exactly what I mean!"

"But that will do; I know what you mean," said Mr. Lauriston. "Well, such things are in the world—misshapen lives, and all manner of queer growths—one must look at them, surely. But I have no morbid taste for them, I hope; I don't think I particularly want to talk about

them. Certainly I don't want to talk about them to you, Miss Conway," he said, with one of his swift smiles.

"But why do you like to think about such things at all?—things that cannot be mended, I mean; it is terrible to think about them. Why do you want to look at them, Mr. Lauriston?"

"I won't retort that it is difficult to say what can or can't be mended," he replied, "because I don't profess to do anything in that line. I simply take things as I find them, one with another. What do you want me to do? Go through the world with my eyes shut, and swear that it is Eden?"

"It might be like Eden, perhaps, if one only looked at what was good and beautiful," said the girl. "Dying doesn't matter so much. But if one thinks of dreadful things, they come back over and over again——"

She was looking at the ground as she walked, and Mr. Lauriston had time for a quick curious glance at her face, before she raised her eyes. He saw that her lip trembled.

"This is only a better version of your desire to be commonplace," he said, and was apparently interested in a distant group of trees. "Of course, as you say, innocence can make an Eden of its own, let the world be what it may."

"Well, then, isn't that the best?"

"If you like," said Mr. Lauriston. "It is very beautiful, no doubt. But give me my choice, and I should like to see this queer world of ours just as it really is, if that were possible—shadows, blood-stains, smouldering fires, and all the rest of it, as well as the beauty. Innocence such as you talk of—pardon me—is something like jaundice; you see the universe your own colour, only of course it is white instead of yellow. It is far better than a preference for horrors; but I should like the truth best, if such a vision could be!"

He had apparently given her time to recover something of the self-possession which she had so unaccountably lost, for she smiled as she answered, "I didn't know you were so prejudiced against innocence, Mr. Lauriston. Well, it is easily got rid of, isn't it?"

He arched his brows. "Do you really think that, Miss Conway? Did your favourite preacher tell you so, and did you believe him? But that is a mistake. The beautiful trustfulness, which sees Eden in this everyday world, clings to some characters. I knew a man once"—Mr. Lauriston looked straight before him, with a half smile, as if he called up the face of his friend—"who thought himself just a little embittered by his knowledge. He fell in love, and made up his mind that happiness might fairly be hoped for in an alliance between a little too much keen-sightedness and the softest and most confiding innocence. What should you say?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Did he try it?"

"Oh, yes; he tried it."

"Well, what happened?" said Rachel, as if she were compelled to ask the question.

"Why, it turned out rather unexpectedly. He found that he had mistaken the parts, and had been playing the wrong one all the time."

"Well, even then I think your friend had the best of it," Miss Conway began defiantly; but a look at Mr. Lauriston's face disconcerted her. "I believe you invented that man," she said. "You are laughing."

"Not at you, then."

They walked a little further. Rachel, distrustfully silent, gazed at the dull sky, while Mr. Lauriston was still half smiling at his jest. He was the first to speak. "Ghost stories are not included among the horrors, really, I hope? My great-great-grandmother didn't haunt you last night, did she?"

"I'm afraid she did, a little," said Rachel, with a quick glance. "But I don't think the ghost had very much to do with it."

"No, of course not. One can't well be frightened by the spectres of past ages. There is a fashion in terrors as in everything else. A man who has an encounter with the devil doesn't do now; the brimstone-burning red-hot style of thing has gone by. It wanted twilight, like snapdragon."

"Yes," she said, in a low voice, "but how dreadful it is to think of the people who lived and died in the twilight, and believed all that! It is easy for you to laugh at their fancies."

"And for you, too, I hope?"

"Yes, here and now. But suppose one were to be alone, and to believe something hideous and dreadful! If I did, it would be true for me then, you know."

Mr. Lauriston was touched by the little cloud of sadness on Miss Conway's pure face, the faint, passing shadow cast by darker ages. "No doubt," he said. "But I don't see how that is to be, unless one went mad."

"Well?" said the girl breathlessly, and looked straight into his eyes.

He felt a cold shock as he met that look with its sudden revelation of fear. There was a moment of startled silence, and she turned her face away. "So that is the bugbear," he said after a pause. "And why, Miss Conway?"

"I don't know," she said, trying to make her tone indifferent. "There isn't any real reason. I suppose everybody has fancies."

"But tell me why," he said, and there was something different in his voice. "Stay, you will be tired; why shouldn't you rest a little while? Sit down here."

They were close to some felled trees, and Rachel obeyed without a word. He chose his place somewhat lower, and rested his elbow on the tree she sat on. Again she heard the birds singing through the grey stillness. The whole afternoon seemed like a dream, and Mr. Lauriston—

who was studiously looking down, and lightly touching a daisy with his foot—was more dream-like than anything else. He had drawn off his glove, and she gazed absently at the white hand with the black signet ring on it, which lay on the rough bark.

"Now tell me about this fancy of yours," he said. It was neither an entreaty which left the decision to her, nor a command which might arouse defiance, but something between the two. And why should she not tell him? It was nothing—how often she had told herself it was nothing, in the loneliest hours of the night! He might laugh—but if he did, would not that laugh help her? Could she not despise her terror, remembering his scorn? Or if—in the very folly of her fears he saw their meaning plainly written, what then? Had she not seen it many a time before? Why should she not tell him? She could not have told Effie, or Mrs. Eastwood, or Charley, but Mr. Lauriston would understand. This was but the third time she had seen him; a week earlier he had been only the merest name to her, and yet she was sure he would understand. Besides, he was going away. She would not have told him if he had stayed on at Redlands; but he was going, and she herself would leave on Monday, and the Eastwoods were only to remain a few days longer. Perhaps she would never see Mr. Lauriston again.

"There isn't anything to tell, really," she said in a tremulous voice. "You will say that I am silly; that will be the kindest thing that you can say. It was only something that frightened me when I was a little child."

"And frightens you still because it frightened you then," he said, looking up at her very kindly. "We leave most of our childish terrors behind us as we grow up, but now and then we find one which grows up with us. Well, Miss Conway?"

She clasped and unclasped her restless hands as she sat. "I wasn't more than ten years old," she said suddenly. "It was before mamma died, and before my father died, too; but he was ill, and away from home, and mamma and I were alone. It was one day in the spring—something like this—and she told me she was going for a drive to see a lady who was ill, and she would take me with her. I don't know where the place was. It was a long way, and I remember crossing a little bridge, and then turning the corner and seeing the house—a grey house with some fir-trees growing on a little hill by it, and a steep drive up to the door. I feel as if I could see it now," said Miss Conway. "There were some straggling laurels, and I remember two vases with the last year's dead geraniums in them. We went into a room where there were three ladies. One was quite old, and I think she was nearly blind, for I know they had to explain to her that I was there. She told them to give me some cake, and that would help to pass the time; and then my mother said we could not stay long, and might she see Miss Agatha?"

"I didn't understand that I was meant to stay with the blind lady, and eat my cake. I always went everywhere with mamma, so I

followed her when she went out with the others, and nobody took any notice. It was an old-fashioned dark passage, and I was small, so as soon as they opened a door I squeezed in amongst them, and stood just inside the room.

"There was a window at the further end, a great desolate-looking grey window, and a lady was standing by it. I fancy she must have been between fifty and sixty. She was very tall, I know. When she heard the door open, she came towards us, waving her hand to us to stay where we were, while she swept a great courtesy in the middle of the room, and then came a step or two further and courtesied again, and all the time she kept her eyes fixed on me. I don't know what the others said or did, I only heard the rustling of her grey silk dress. I couldn't move, she frightened me so with her great staring eyes. It wasn't that she was ugly—I think she must have been handsome once—but it was a dreadful face; one was forced to watch it, one didn't know what she would do next, it was like a nightmare. She took no notice of mamma; she just nodded and said, 'I'm welcoming my new visitor; she shall come and stay with me—she shall come and stay with me.' Of course it was only a moment, really; and then a woman at a work-table, who stood up when we went in, stepped forward, and said, 'It's little miss she means, ma'am;' and my mother looked round and saw me standing there. She ran and caught me, and took me into the passage, and held me in her arms, and said I mustn't be frightened, that the lady didn't mean any harm, but she never intended me to go in to see her. I heard Miss Agatha calling after me as we went back to the other room. I waited there with the blind lady till mamma was ready to go. She was crying when she came, and she cried in the carriage as we drove away. And I remember looking back just before we crossed the little bridge, and seeing the old house on the hill, and the fir-trees all black and twisted against the clouds, and feeling as if there must be something wicked about the place."

"You poor little frightened child!" said Mr. Lauriston softly. "And what more did you learn about Miss Agatha?"

"Only that my mother used to stay with her when she was a girl. Miss Agatha and her sisters were no relations of hers, but they lived in the same place, and were rich people. I know I thought that those were the sisters I had seen; but she said, 'No, only Miss Agatha lived with them; their brother was a doctor.' She would not tell me much, and she did not know how frightened I was, nor how I used to dream at night."

Miss Conway stopped all at once. "*It does sound childish,*" she said. "Are you laughing at me, Mr. Lauriston? I don't think I knew how silly it would seem. But yet, indeed, there hasn't been one day since that day that I haven't thought of that madwoman. And I don't care if you *are* laughing," she said desperately, while the hot colour flushed her face; "I am going to finish since I've begun."

"I'm not laughing," Mr. Lauriston replied.

"And there isn't much more to say, luckily. Only it was just then that my father died. He was away and mamma went to him. She had never been very strong—she was tiny and slight, with dark eyes—not like me, I'm like papa—and she caught a cold, and that was the beginning of the end. She was dead too before I was twelve. I will tell you what is dreadful, Mr. Lauriston, even if you *do* laugh. If you are alone in a big school, and would give all the world to dream of your mother at night, and yet you would keep awake if you could, because you know you will dream of something else. It is perfectly silly, I know, but it is dreadful all the same."

"Poor child, how you must have suffered! But now—surely not now?"

"Not now," Miss Conway repeated. "But, Mr. Lauriston, why is it that even now it haunts me, only in a different way? I feel as if that madwoman had somehow laid hands on my life, and, though I fight for it, it is all spoiled and ruined in the struggle. Why am I so frightened if people only mention the word 'madness'? If anybody points out a building, and says it is a lunatic asylum, the blood runs cold in my veins. Suppose one went mad and were shut up in one of those awful places"—Miss Conway made a gallant attempt to smile—"shut up with people who came courtesying to one, and had staring eyes! I know all this is folly, but that is just what frightens me most of all. Why should such a little thing take possession of me like this? Would it if I were like other people?" She turned her appealing eyes to Mr. Lauriston. "You laughed at me last night when I said I wanted to be commonplace, but if I could only be sure that I should live and die like the millions of happy commonplace folks—if I could be quite sure——"

"You would have a security that not one man, woman, or child of all those millions possesses," he replied. "You would be the one standing apart from all our common fears and perils. All that you have told me is natural enough—a most unlucky chance, but nothing more. This mad friend of your mother's saw you and forgot you within the day; you were no more to her than she really was to you; but, being a child with a powerful imagination, you were haunted by her meaningless looks and words. And then your mother's death left you alone with your terror."

"But now," said Rachel, "now that I know all this?"

"Well," Mr. Lauriston replied, "what is unnatural now? Your thoughts have been fixed on this one dark subject, till madness has assumed too prominent a position in your vision of the world. People who make it their study generally do so with some hope of alleviating its misery. That gives a healthful interest; but you know nothing of it, you have not studied it, you have only brooded over your childish fancy."

"Are you blaming me?" she asked doubtfully.

"Blaming you, no! You could not help it. I am merely trying to put the matter in the right light, to show you that there is nothing awful and exceptional about it. I want you to see that the cause of your trouble is simple enough." He stopped abruptly. "Good heavens! what can I say? I believe that I am talking the most excellent sense, and yet how atrociously cold it all sounds!"

"You are very kind," she said, looking down. "I don't think you are cold."

"Thank you. No, I hope I am not. And, really, I am saying the best I have to say. If it is any good to tell you that I am very sorry, and that I would help you if I could, I can give you that assurance. But I have no stock of universally consoling maxims to offer you, Miss Conway. I don't deal in them. It matters the less, as I have no doubt that some one has already suggested the usual style of comfort."

"But I have never told any one else," she said.

"Never told any one else—do you mean that literally? Never when you were a child? Never since then?"

"Never," she repeated. "I was afraid. I thought people wouldn't understand. I never said anything from that day to this."

"You told no one through all these years?" said Mr. Lauriston, half to himself. "And now you have told me!"

Simple as the words were, they gave a new significance to Rachel's confession. She felt a weight of meaning in them, and drew back, colouring afresh as she met his eyes. This secret of hers might be the merest folly, a trifle, an absurdity; but she had guarded it from her childhood, she had spoken no syllable of it to those who knew her best, and she had told it unreservedly to this chance acquaintance of three days. The passing touch of his surprise awoke her own. Why had she done it? She was not even sure that she liked Mr. Lauriston—at that moment she was half inclined to believe that she hated him. And what would he think of her?

It was true that he was surprised, but he was not, as Rachel imagined, reckoning the hours of their acquaintance. That she should have spoken after three days was no more in his eyes than if she had spoken after three weeks, or three months, but that she had told her secret suffering to him alone out of all the world was an all-important fact. What did she think of him that she had done it?

"I don't know why I told you," she said, as she drew back, with a quick glance of distrust and defiance, a sign of the inevitable reaction after the strong impulse of confidence. "It was too bad to bore you with that silly story."

"I hope you told me because you felt you might trust me. You did not bore me."

"Trust you with my nightmare fancies?" said the girl, trying to laugh. "Well, perhaps. At any rate I think I knew you would

understand. Some people wouldn't, you know, even if they were my best friends."

"The Eastwoods, for instance?" Mr. Lauriston suggested. "I don't know much about the girls. Charley is a good fellow; but, possibly, if I had a fanciful secret——"

"Tell *him*! No, I couldn't," said Rachel. "He always seems so bright, and all his life so frank and open. Why, I hardly think of such things when he is by."

"So," said Mr. Lauriston to himself, "that is the charm;" and aloud he answered, "And, though you have told me, it seems to me that I have said nothing, and done nothing. What *can* I do, Miss Conway?"

"You can't do anything," she said, "except tell me the truth. Do you think me—mad to be frightened as I am?"

"No, I don't. Did I not tell you that before?"

She leaned towards him, pleading with earnest eyes, and half reaching out a timid hand. "Do tell me the truth, Mr. Lauriston."

"I don't think anything of the kind, upon my honour I don't," he repeated. "Anybody might be frightened. I'm speaking the simple truth—you believe me?"

"Yes," she said. "Thank you. I am very glad." There was a pause during which she looked far away into the green dimness of the wooded landscape. Mr. Lauriston felt as if that spot would be haunted for ever by the pale, beautiful shadow of a girl, questioning the distance with an anxious gaze. The little interval of silence seemed curiously long to him, and it was a relief when a shiver in the branches overhead broke the spell, and she looked at the sullen sky and stood up.

"Miss Conway," he said as he rose, "you must try not to think of all this."

She smiled. "Do you know, I was wishing, as I sat there, that I had never said a word about it. You can't think how vividly it has all come back to me. It might be yesterday—or to-day."

"But that will pass off," he urged in his gentle voice. "And then do you not think that you will like to remember that you have a friend who tells you that all this fear is nothing—that there is no foundation for it? For we shall be friends, shall we not?"

"If you like," she said absently, but after a moment she recollected herself. "I beg your pardon, Mr. Lauriston, I didn't mean to be ungrateful; you have been very good to me. Yes, let us be friends, please. It is quite true, I *shall* like to think that there is some one who knows about my stupid fancies; it will help me. It was silly of me to say I was sorry I had talked about it; if it does make me realise it more just to-day, what does it matter?" She stood, drawing a long blade of grass through her fingers. "It isn't as if we were likely to meet often," she added softly.

Even if she had been looking at Mr. Lauriston she might hardly have

understood the flash of expression which crossed his face. As it was, she was utterly unconscious of it.

"No, I suppose we shan't meet often," he replied. "And perhaps it is just as well, if you are always going to see me in your mind's eye side by side with the madwoman."

"Oh, no, no! I only meant that of course I should remember that you knew. I must remember that."

"Naturally," he said with a smile. "Of course you must. So all I can do for you is to stand out of the sunshine? It doesn't sound like asking very much of me, and yet I'm tempted to ask for something in return."

"What is that?"

"Well, in common fairness that something mustn't be very much either, must it? Don't look round as if you were thinking of turning back."

"But I must go back now, Mr. Lauriston."

"No; come a little further through a bit of the garden, and you shall go out another way, nearer the village. There is my request," he said, still smiling.

"Is it far?"

"No, not far. Oh, no, you needn't look at the sky. It will not rain."

"I feel as if there might be thunder, don't you? But I shall like very much to come," she added politely.

Why did Mr. Lauriston wish to prolong their walk? Did he want his garden, as well as the park, haunted by that pale memory of Rachel Conway? Or was it only a whim? He did his best to amuse her, with anxious kindness in every word and look, and she did her best to be amused, but it was an effort. She felt as if she were in dreamland still, as if a melancholy change had passed over everything. It almost seemed as if, when she uttered her secret, the trees and flowers had heard it, and would whisper it mournfully one to another through all the world. The grey sadness of the afternoon was *her* sadness, the singing of the birds was strange and new, the very daisies in the grass looked up with eyes of deep significance. She was half frightened at her wandering fancies while she tried to talk to Mr. Lauriston. They pursued her when she passed into the old-fashioned garden, which had been the glory of an earlier Redlands Hall. Mr. Lauriston showed her where the old house once stood. She answered almost mechanically, and she looked round with a show of interest; but she walked in dreamland all the while, and felt oppressed and dull among the high clipped hedges and formal paths. Her companion's soft voice was saying in her ear, "I've no doubt that my great-grandfather would have done away with it all, but happily he was so busy laying out the grounds about his new house, that he never found time to modernise this."

"That was very lucky," she replied.

"Yes; for it is a quaint old place, isn't it? And my uncle cared so much for it, that nothing would have induced him to make the slightest change. Judging from a sketch we have, the old house was picturesquely suited to the garden, and I don't think he ever forgave its destruction."

"Well, it was a pity. Don't you think so?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Yes, it was a great pity. I'm only thankful that the present Hall is a tolerably comfortable place in which to deplore my ancestor's want of taste. It was a very great pity, of course, and I am exceedingly sorry. It is sad to think of such utter want of reverence for the memories that had gathered round the old home." After a moment's pause he added gravely, "I always feel that there is such scope for beautiful sentiment when a thing cannot possibly be altered."

Rachel answered only with a languid smile, glancing from Mr. Lauriston's face to the site of the old house, a bit of smooth sward, green and fresh as countless graves are green. She drew a long breath as they turned their backs on it, and went forward under the trees. It seemed to her that the low arch of sky dropped its curtain of cloud so heavily about the narrow landscape that all the air was dead. And, as she walked, she pictured to herself how the madwoman might suddenly turn the corner of one of those long avenues, and come towards her, sweeping stately courtesies, while Mr. Lauriston would vanish with a polite bow, and leave her alone with her terror. Of course she knew perfectly well that it was utter nonsense; but the scenery was so curiously suited to the visionary drama, that she felt as if she could actually see it, and it troubled her as an ill dream might have done.

"You are tired," said Mr. Lauriston, in a tone of self-reproach.

Any other voice would have startled her out of her fancies, but Mr. Lauriston's words came softly, with no discord, as if he belonged to her dream world. "No, I'm not tired; not really tired," she replied. And when he persisted, she answered, with a determination which he recognised as unchangeable, "No; she would walk home, he should not send her." As she spoke they turned into a wide path, and he crossed it quickly and went on. For a moment it occurred to her to wonder whether it could be the yew walk of which he had talked. The doubt lasted only for a moment, the place did not answer to his description, but her backward glance, as she followed him, gave her a glimpse of a nursemaid and child at the further end of the avenue.

Mr. Lauriston slackened his pace and was silent, and Rachel's heart smote her. He had been kind to her; had she spoken coldly? Even if she had not, she was conscious of a longing to escape from her companion and the dreary fancies which his talk had called up, and she felt the unspoken desire an ingratitude, for which she wanted to make amends. Instinct told her that to ask a favour, however trifling, would be the best way to please Mr. Lauriston. She looked round. "May I have

one or two of those lilies of the valley?" she said. "I like them so much."

He stooped to gather them, and she watched his fingers parting the broad leaves. "Shall you ever come to Redlands again, Miss Conway?" he asked, with a quick, upward glance.

"Ah, that is more than I can say. But I don't think it is very likely."

"No, I suppose not. And even if you did, you would not want to come here."

"Why not?" she said, looking down, as she took the flowers from his hand. "How sweet these lilies are!"

"You would not," he repeated. "I meant you to enjoy your walk this afternoon; or, perhaps," with a smile, "I meant to enjoy it."

"Well," said the girl, "I did enjoy it—at first. And if, afterwards—it was no fault of yours!"

"That may be," Mr. Lauriston replied. "I didn't say I was to blame. But you yourself allow that it did not end as it began. I am not surprised, for, judging from my own experience, Fate is generally ironical. As a rule I get what I want, and then I discover either that I didn't want it, or that it has slipped through my fingers. Have you found that?"

"I don't know," she said. She understood that he was thinking of his beautiful wife so quickly lost, of his son and heir a poor little cripple, of Redlands, perhaps, so full of memories of that year of happiness, and now almost a burden to him. She was touched by his half confidence, and looked timidly at him.

"And so I am sorry," he went on, "sorry that you are less happy than I fancied——"

"Oh, but I am very happy sometimes," she said. "I'm not always thinking about that."

"No, indeed, I should hope not. And I'm sorry, too, that you seem to regret having trusted me. You need not, Miss Conway. I suppose you haven't any brothers or sisters?" he said abruptly.

"I have nobody," Rachel answered, "not even a cousin. I live with a Miss Whitney, who was a friend of my mother's."

"Then do you think you could look upon me as a kind of elder brother?" said Mr. Lauriston, half smiling in his deliberate speech; "so that you might take it as a matter of course that I was very much at your service, if ever I could help you in any way? No, I see that won't do; you don't like the idea. Is it that you fancy that brothers are too apt to dictate to their sisters?"

Rachel blushed, perceiving that she had betrayed herself. It was true that the idea of Mr. Lauriston as a brother had struck her as absurdly impossible. She might not know what a girl's feelings towards a brother would be, but she was quite certain that they could not be the least like the curiosity, the fanciful wonder, the alternate attraction and

repulsion, trust and distrust, which she felt as she looked at Mr. Lauriston. And his soft-voiced politeness was not a brother's manner as she had imagined it. "I don't think I can fancy what it would be like to have a brother," she said doubtfully.

"Well, then, it shall be friendship, as you said a minute ago. Perhaps that will be best." They had left the garden, and were walking along the drive which crossed the park. As they passed a clump of trees the great gates, with the Lauriston crest upon them, came in sight, and Miss Conway paused. "Don't come all the way with me, please," she said. "I think I would rather go back alone."

He stopped at once. "You granted my request," he said, "so I must not complain. You won't have far to go when once you are in the road, Miss Conway. I hope you won't be tired."

"Mr. Lauriston," said Rachel, "you have been very kind to me, and it seems to me that I've been very ungrateful all the time."

"Not at all," he politely assured her; but there was an expression in his bright eyes which she did not quite understand.

"I'm very sorry," she said. "I'm afraid I was rather rude once. I think I said more than I meant to say. I don't quite know how to make you understand. I meant"—she hesitated, looking down at the lilies in her hand—"that is, I didn't mean——"

"I fancy I know what you meant," he said. "Surely I've made it clear that I haven't taken anything amiss."

"But it seems to me that I have done something amiss."

"No, indeed you have not. And for proof of it," he said, with a peculiar little laugh, "for proof that you have not, we are sworn friends, you know." Rachel glanced at him, fancying she detected something of mockery in his laugh; but the next moment he went on, and his voice took a fuller and deeper tone, "Do not apologise, Miss Conway, and never trouble yourself about anything you have said or done to me."

She held out her hand. "Goodbye," she said softly, "and thank you."

"Ah, don't thank me! It sounds so cruelly ironical, when I would have done something, and could do nothing. Goodbye."

But, as she turned away, he called after her, "Miss Conway," and rejoined her. "I think I'm old enough to claim the privilege of giving advice," he said. "Of course you have the privilege of taking no heed of it—that belongs to us all from our cradles. May I speak?"

"Yes," Rachel answered, looking at him in some surprise.

"You want to be commonplace," said Mr. Lauriston, "but you are not commonplace, and you can't be. Don't ruin your life in the attempt. You are so young, you have many years before you, take care what you are about. Half a century or so of weariness would be a terrible penalty to pay for a blunder. Pardon me for saying this, and once more goodbye."

His earnestness startled her. "Goodbye," she echoed, and went hurriedly towards the gate. "Half a century!" The words had caught

her attention and held it. They pursued her as she walked, and, brief as they were, they overwhelmed her with their volume of meaning. He could not know—could he know?—what need there was of his warning, how, in the terror of her loneliness, she longed to mix her life with lives narrower than her own, and to rest in their homely shelter. It would not be hard to speak a word on one of those spring days, just a word which would give an undefined future into Charley's kindly keeping. But half a century with Charley Eastwood! She went out into the road, burdened with the weight of those accumulated years. She questioned within herself whether it was fair to expect any one to live as long as that. Half a century! The mere thought of it was like putting life under a microscope; every little failing, every harmless habit, was exaggerated into something enormous, grotesque, oppressive. Why should not Charley go to sleep on Sunday afternoons if he liked? She knew he always did, and on the previous Sunday she had exchanged amused and stealthy glances with Effie, when, after letting his book slip downward to the floor, he laid his head on the end of the sofa, and slumbered peacefully with his mouth open. Miss Conway, a little listless herself, had felt no ill will towards the sleeping youth. But now she could not escape from a whimsical calculation of two thousand six hundred heavy Sundays, an unbroken vista of drowsy afternoons, at the end of which she saw Charley waking up, and stretching himself in his far-off old age, before he went down into his grave. And every nap, in that lifelong series, would mark a completed week of little thoughts and cares. It was terrible, and she felt her heart grow sick within her, even while she was fully conscious of the ridiculous aspect which Mr. Lauriston's half-century had assumed in her thoughts. The laughter which trembled on her lip did not mend the matter, for absurdities are often of all things most intolerable. How was she to live through all those Sunday afternoons, and what would she be at the end of them?

Coming to a curve in the road, she turned for a last look at Redlands Hall. Through the fanciful spirals and bars of the iron gates, she could see the long drive, the smooth green turf, the trees, in their heavy leafiness of early summer, massed round the great brick house, and the sullen sky above them all. As she looked, she had a momentary glimpse of Mr. Lauriston, crossing an open space. He passed behind a widely sweeping cedar, and, though she watched, wondering whether the slim far-off black figure would appear again, she watched in vain, for he was gone. "Sworn friends," he had said, and already it seemed to her that her friend was out of reach. It was true that only a few minutes earlier she had wished to escape from him; but nevertheless, as she lingered on the road, looking backward at that sunless picture, she felt lonely and deserted.

It was, however, too late to stand gazing, even if it had not been so utterly useless. Miss Conway looked at her watch, and set her face homeward, making a resolute effort to banish all thoughts of that after-

noon, and to fix her mind on the speedy return of Charley and Effie from their drive, and the prospect of a meat tea. She planned a brief and bald account of her walk with Mr. Lauriston, which she hoped would not offend anybody's sense of propriety, though she felt a little dubious about Mrs. Eastwood's view of the matter. "I suppose I shall have to tell her first," she thought. "Well, it can't be helped, and it's lucky it isn't Miss Whitney." So she walked bravely on, with curiously mingled feelings of guilt and innocence. She was quite certain that Mrs. Eastwood would strongly disapprove of such confidential talk between a young lady and a gentleman, especially when the confidences were all on the young lady's side; and, indeed, Rachel felt the colour rising to her cheeks again, as she remembered her own frankness. But below this guilty trouble lay the consciousness of utter guiltlessness.

There was a quick sound of pursuing wheels, a cry of "Rachel! Rachel!" in Effie's clear little voice, and Charley was pulling up, and calling to her to jump in. "Room—yes, lots!" was his answer to an attempted objection, "and I'm not going on without you—so there! Jump in at once. That's it—are you all right? If you haven't room enough it's Effie's fault; take it out of her. And what have you been doing with yourself, eh?" So before Rachel well knew what had happened, she was perched up between Charley and Effie, and they were rattling along the lane.

She answered their questions lightly and shortly, and found it easier to do than she had expected. "Then Lauriston has made you walk too far," said Charley. "He ought to have known better than to march you about like that."

"I'm not tired, really."

"Oh, no," said the young fellow, "not at all. Does he think he's the only man in the world with a park and gardens, that he's so awfully anxious to show them off? And he tired you last night, too. I wish I'd been there this afternoon; don't you think I'd have taken better care of you than that?"

Rachel laughed. Her fantastic terrors were vanishing at the cheery sound of Charley's voice, and she could almost believe that the skies were brightening round her as they drove. A touch of the whip quickened the leisurely old horse, and the evening air came freshly to her face. They jolted over a stone, Rachel swayed a little, and her shoulder came into momentary contact with Charley, while, on the other side, Effie's small, caressing hand stole under her arm. She felt safe in a little world of simple, everyday facts, and honest kindliness. "And now tell me what you have been doing," she said.

"Rowing on the river," Effie promptly replied. "I've been rowing; Reggie Maxwell has been teaching me. Such fun; I wish you'd been with us."

"Here we are!" said Charley. "The old horse wanted to take us up that last turning to his stable, did you see?"

Fanny came running out of the leafy porch to meet them. "Oh, you've got Rachel!—we began to wonder—why, Effie, you've torn your dress, did you know? Have you had a pleasant day?"

Charley helped Rachel down, and answered Fanny's question in her ear as he did so. "I'd rather have been here," he said softly.

"Oh, a glorious day!" Effie exclaimed. "Only we kept thinking it was going to pour. I say, Fanny, Susie Maxwell has grown quite pretty, and Reggie is such a nice fellow, not a bit shy."

"By Jove, no, I should think he wasn't," said Charley.

"Well, he used to be very shy," Effie replied. "Did you say I'd torn my dress, Fanny? Where is it? Is it very bad?"

"Here—no, not so very bad. You can put a little bit in—you had some bits left, hadn't you? Oh, Effie, who do you think came to call this afternoon?"

"Who?" Effie asked, passing the hem of her dress between her fingers. "I daresay I caught it on one of those bushes by the river when I was getting into the boat. Who called, Fanny?"

"Mr. Brand. Rachel, Mr. Brand came just as mother came back. He stayed ever so long."

"Mr. Brand!" Effie repeated, with a faint accent of regret in her voice. But in a moment she recovered herself. "And Fanny, I was going to tell you, Reggie Maxwell's hair isn't bad now at all. Only a nice red, you know, like what they put in pictures—isn't it, Charley?"

"Yes, just like what you'd put into a picture of a tomato," Charley replied. "Nice cheerful colour for a dull day."

"I daresay you think that's clever. I call it silly," said Effie. "Oh, here's mother! Mother, Mrs. Maxwell sent you her love, and there's some asparagus for you. Charley, where's that asparagus? I know it's somewhere; I saw Reggie put it in just before we started. Oh, you dear darling Fido, aren't you glad to see me again—aren't you, then? And was it a dear little doggie, and would it have liked to come to Brookfield, too, and didn't Rachel take it out for a nice little run—didn't she, then? Oh, a naughty Rachel, wasn't she, going for her walks with her Mr. Lauristons, and never thinking about a poor Fido, a poor old bow-wow!"

"He was asleep," said Miss Conway. She rejoiced to find that in the eager haste of question and reply, her own adventures seemed likely to be lightly passed over. Mrs. Eastwood, it is true, wondered several times how Miss Lauriston happened to fall downstairs, which Miss Lauriston it was who had fallen downstairs, and how many stairs she fell down; but being greatly interested in telling Rachel about an aunt of hers, who slipped from the top to the bottom of a flight of stone steps, and only took a bit of skin about the size of a three-penny piece off her elbow, it did not occur to her to ask many questions about the walk. Later in the evening, when tea was over, and Rachel had begun a game of bezique with Charley, Effie, who was looking over her friend's hand

and scoring for her, was suddenly struck with an idea. "What on earth did you talk about all this afternoon, you and Mr. Lauriston?" she asked.

"Oh, I don't know—all sorts of things. Aces, Effie. You think he isn't easy to talk to, but he has plenty to say, really."

"Oh, Lauriston can talk as fast as you please," said Eastwood. "Not much in my style, though; I suppose I'm not clever enough to appreciate him." He smiled good-humouredly, as if cleverness were an amiable weakness which he had happily escaped. "And if I'm not much mistaken he bored you last night, didn't he? You were curious about the Squire before you saw him—weren't you?—and I rather thought you two would get on; but I fancy you've had about enough of him if the truth were known, eh?" And Charley nodded, pleased at his own penetration.

"Did he bore you?" said Effie, sympathetically, as she marked sixty for queens. "The park is lovely; but I'm sure if I had to walk about there, *tête-à-tête* with Mr. Lauriston, I should soon have had enough of him, and wanted somebody else. That's a common marriage, isn't it?"

"Reggie Maxwell, for instance?" said Charley, and the discussion ended in a scuffle, which rather interfered with the bezique.

When Rachel went up to her room that night, there was a faint sweetness in the air, which puzzled her for a moment, till she remembered Mr. Lauriston's gift of lilies. She had put them in a glass of water on her table, and, as she paused before them, she recalled the spot where they grew, his quick hands seeking among the leaves, and the dark brightness of his eyes, as he rose and gave them to her. It was commonplace enough; and yet she fancied that the flowers were like those which blossom here and there in old legends, gathered hastily in some borderland of strange visions, and brought back to fade in the light of common day, and she turned away, feeling as if their perfume were the subtle essence of her melancholy. Outside, the rain was falling in heavy drops. She opened the window, and instantly the dreary pattering upon the roof became a rushing wave of sound, and a breath of pleasant coolness. One might have fancied whispers of unknown meaning abroad in the night, mixed with a multitude of softly falling footsteps. Rachel gazed out into the darkness. Close at hand she could see the glimmer of her candle on the wet sill, and the shining leaves of ivy and wistaria. She could partly make out the dark mass of the great elm-tree which overshadowed the house, and further off she knew were lights in the village windows. Beyond those, gaze as she would, she saw nothing, but she leaned and looked till she seemed to understand the message of the rain. It told her of the drops that were falling on the whispering leaves in Redlands Park, soaking the heather on the dusky moor, feeding the scarcely formed fruit in Mrs. Pattenden's quaint orchard, and roughening the river's glassy surface into countless

little eddies. All these things became present to her as she looked. And beyond them—what? She gazed into the darkness in an ever-widening dream. There were roads leading outward into a great world—fields, sown for the food of busy millions, drinking the fallen rain—
islands and vast continents—mountains with lonely summits—forests, and seas, with strange life in their hiding-places—cities with flaring lights, all lying behind the thin black curtain of the night. The darkness was full of that great life. Rachel saw her own existence as the merest atom, built into a mighty fabric, which could crush, but could not shelter.

What had Mr. Lauriston said? That if she could be secure she would stand apart from all mankind. There was no one of all those myriads, then, who was safe—no refuge in all the weary miles of earth and sea. She felt as if her fear had become the fear of all the world. And she had thought that he might help her, or Charley Eastwood!

It was long before she slept that night. She tossed restlessly from side to side, she recalled the events of the past day, she burned with uneasy shame at the thought of her silly confidences, she was angry with Mr. Lauriston for her own foolishness, she was angry with Charley for being exactly what he had been ever since she first knew him and liked him. She was tired out, and yet she could not sleep, and as the slow hours wore away she was frightened. The grey lady came back to her more vividly than she had done since those nights of childish agony. The stiff silk dress swept over the floor, the great eyes sought her own, the shadows of those other figures stood, as they stood on that terrible day, with their backs to her, unheeding. The darkness seemed to stifle her; and in the darkness lurked thoughts from which she turned in dismay, fearing lest a glance should stamp them for ever on her soul—thoughts of barred windows, and alien faces, and passionate frenzies of delusion, breaking like beaten waves against the immovable might of common sense. Her inconstant humour veered round again. Oh, for Charley, Charley Eastwood with his simple pleasure in living, and his healthy scorn of sick and baseless fancies! Oh, for Charley's pleasant smile, and one breath of the happy breezes blowing over Bucksmill Hill!

Sleep came at last; but not till the tired eyes had seen the light stealing drearily over the village roofs, while the wistaria which by day was all blossom and perfume and colour, and busy humming of the bees, hung in cold grey clusters against a desolate morning sky.

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come one day to feel differently, and the hope has been my life—*my life*. I cannot live without it." The words were strong; but, like the escape of steam at a tremendous pressure, they rather indicated than fully expressed the force which underlay them. But the very greatness of his love only made Mabel falter. What had she to give in exchange for this Titanic passion? Such a return as the cold pale light of the moon makes to the glow and glory of the sun it reflects. There was a kind of childlike awe in her heart and in her face as she looked up at the intense light of love that shone down upon her out of Lawley's dark eyes.

"What shall I say?" in a voice that trembled and seemed to plead for forgiveness. "I have no love like yours to give. I like you, and shall like you always, better than anyone else, but that is not enough."

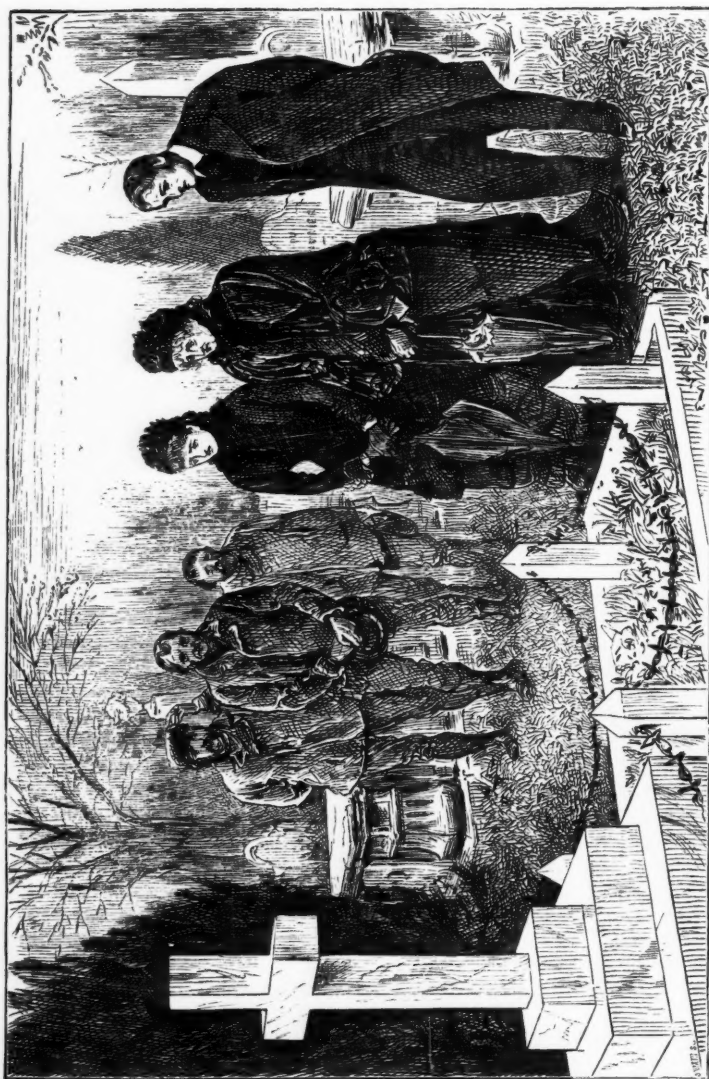
"It is enough and more than enough," cried Lawley, with an impetuosity which was startling from him, seizing and imprisoning both her hands in his. "Only take my love. Do not reject it. It is all I ask."

"But you will want more. You will not be happy; it is of your happiness I think."

"My happiness!" He drew her to him and passionately kissed her on the brow, cheeks, and lips, rebuked only by her burning blushes. Yet Mabel's heart rebelled. These kisses recalled the dead to her, and accused her of unfaithfulness to his memory. Besides, the wild, devouring passion they expressed only made her realise more miserably the difference between the love she was given and the liking she had to give. A love which was a mere liking, though the strongest of likings, was not what he asked or gave, or what she must vow to him at the altar. On the other hand, she had been so used all her life to find her happiness in the happiness of others, that Lawley's perfect joy was sweet to her. Not as the sweetest of flattery only, but as something she had given him for all he had been, and done, and suffered for her sake.

On the whole, the probabilities were all on Lady Saddlethwaite's side when she said that night to Mabel, "I thank you now, my dear, but the time will come when you will thank me for praying you, like an Italian beggar, to 'do good to yourself.'"

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"THERE IS NO FINER EPITAPH IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY."

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THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1882.

Love the Debt.

CHAPTER XLV.

PUSHED FROM HIS STOOL.



AWLEY stayed over Sunday at Hollyhurst. The large fortune left him by his uncle enabled him to keep, among other luxuries, a curate, whom he overwhelmed by a telegram asking him to take all the duty of the day following. One sermon was nearly as grievous a burden to the newly-ordained curate as to his hearers, and two were crushing, especially when ordered late on Saturday afternoon; but, though Lawley knew this, and felt for

his wretched victim, he could not tear himself away from Mabel. She had no need to be concerned for his happiness if these first hours of their engagement were any augury of the future. "Usually in love," says the cynical Frenchman, "one loves and the other submits to be loved;" and again, "In love, to love a little is the surest way to be

loved much." Whatever truth there is in these maxims—and no doubt there is some truth in them—helps to explain the intensity of Lawley's love and happiness. It was enough for him that Mabel accepted his love and his life. Mabel took these great gifts with awe and exceeding diffidence, and found them even greater than she had imagined. Lawley disclosed to her a depth of tenderness of which she had no conception. Even when Lady Saddlethwaite was present all his cynicism was sheathed. Out of the depths sprung up a fountain of kindly humour as a fountain of sweet water sometimes springs out from the depths of the ocean, in strange contrast to the acrid cynicism he was given to. But when Mabel and he were *tête-à-tête*, and he opened his whole heart to her, she found in it, as we say, a depth of womanly tenderness which amazed and touched and drew her to him irresistibly. He told her frankly of the source of his cynicism and misogyny—the treachery of his first love, a young lady who jilted him for his elder brother—now dead—and to whom he allowed no small proportion of his income. About her, we need hardly say, Mabel was extremely curious. Lawley, however, was much more anxious to speak of his present love, and could hardly be got off this fascinating subject. He had the tact, too, scarcely to be looked for from a lunatic or a lover, to dwell upon the amount of good Mabel could do as a clergyman's wife among the poor and in the schools, and to himself. For, he gave her to understand with perfect truth, that since he was lost in love he had no heart for sacred or secular work, or anything but her. Mabel archly suggested that this great work of reclamation put at such length before her might have been tersely expressed in one word—"the MacGucken;" that she was chosen as the less of two evils, on the same principle as that by which a special fiery sherry was tried by the late Lord Derby to expel the gout, and with probably as unsatisfactory a result, for his lordship, upon trial of both, preferred the gout. But, indeed, Mr. Lawley had hit upon a happy plan for ridding himself of the MacGucken, or rather, for ridding the MacGucken of himself. He would build a vicarage, leaving the old house as a hospital in her charge. He intended to make the church some present, and might as well put it in a form which would benefit at the same time his parish and himself. But while the vicarage was being built he meant to go abroad—with Mabel. In other words, he meant that they should be married at once and spend a long honeymoon in those places—treasured carefully in his memory—which he had heard Mabel at different times express a wish to see. Mabel, thus startled into realising her betrothal, recoiled from an immediate marriage, and was with difficulty wearied into consenting to its taking place three months hence. With this hardly-wrung concession Lawley was fain to be content, and for the rest was absolutely and supremely happy, too happy, fey. As he drove into the school with Mabel on Monday morning he dwelt on the happiness she had given him in terms which almost terrified her. Even if she loved him with her whole heart she could not,

have made him half as happy as he hoped, but as it was—her heart sank within her. But he—he had no misgivings. He was in wild spirits, intoxicated with that true *vinum Dæmonum*, day dreams, and little thought that the passionate kiss he pressed upon her lips as they neared the school was his last. Two hours after they parted at the school door he was again at Hollyhurst, wild and bewildered with an unopened letter in his hand.

"Mr. Lawley! what has happened?"

He handed Lady Saddlethwaite the unopened letter, whose address, however, told her no story.

"From him," he said, sinking into a chair, and looking wildly up at her. Lady Saddlethwaite began to think his brain was affected.

"From him? From whom?"

"Kneeshaw!"

"The murdered man?"

Lawley nodded.

"Nonsense! Impossible! You haven't opened it." She still thought his head turned.

"I can't," he said hoarsely, starting up and striding to the mantelpiece, and leaning his face upon his folded arms.

"You open it."

Lady Saddlethwaite tore open the envelope and looked at the signature of the letter. "George B. Kneeshaw." She looked back to the address and date, in the hope which Lawley had been too stunned to think of, that the letter was an old one. No, it was dated seven weeks since. She sat down, stunned also. Presently he faced round, white, haggard, looking ten years older than he looked two hours since.

"What does he say?"

"I haven't read it, but it's from him."

"Yes, it's from him. He was my dearest friend, yet I wished him dead. God! how I love that girl!"

He turned from her again and buried his face in his hands. Lady Saddlethwaite looked on in helpless pity. At last she said,

"He cares nothing for her. Why didn't he write to her all this time? He has forgotten her. I should let her forget him."

"Does he say nothing of her?" he cried with sudden hope, turning once more, and taking the letter from her hand. Its very first words had an application little intended by the writer.

"My dear Lawley,

The times have been,

That when the brains were out the man would die,

And there an end; but now they rise again,

With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,

And push us from our stools.

("Ay 'push us from our stools,'" repeated Lawley bitterly.)

"You at least will rejoice to hear that I am alive; and yet I left you all this time in the belief that I was murdered; and I should not

have written even now even to you if it was not for the horrible news of her engagement, which I came upon by an accident in a scrap of an old newspaper. I've gone through terrible sufferings since we parted, but I never knew what agony was till then. I thought I could write calmly; I cannot——"

Here the letter broke off and resumed under a new date a day latter.

"I allowed her to think me dead that she might be free to do as she has done; but I did not realise what it would be to me, or I could not have done it. Poor as I was, broken in fortune and health, a beggar and on the brink of starvation, I should have kept her to her miserable engagement sooner than suffer this if I had known what torture it would be to me. I did try to keep her to it when too late, when it would only have made her wretched without lightening my wretchedness. When I read the news I started for Castlemaine as I was, in workman's clothes, meaning to telegraph both to her and you. But when I reached the town I had no money, and could get none, and had to go home, two days' journey, and so had time to come to myself, and to come to thank God that I was saved from doing a cruel and dastardly thing. But I was mad in those first moments, and am mad, or at least, not sane, at times now. That she should engage herself, within two months was it? of the news of my murder! It is maddening. Who was this Lord Charlecote? She was the last girl in the world I should have thought——. Lawley, you can never know how I loved that girl. I could have died for her. It would have been easier and better for me to have died for her than to have allowed her to think me dead that she might be free to forget me—in two months! Yet since the day we parted there has not been one waking hour in which she was out of my thoughts. It was my own fault, you will say. I should have written and prevented or contradicted the report of my murder. You will not say so when you hear my story."

The letter then proceeded to give in outline the story we have already told of George's fortunes, carrying it on to the day when he came upon the news of Mabel's engagement to Lord Charlecote. Just before he chanced upon it, a wool speculation had turned out so extraordinarily well that he had made his mind up to write home and break the news of his being alive and prosperous, through Lawley, to Mabel, if she still were free.

George's letter closed with a short, simple, and touching allusion to their friendship, the only thing now left to him in the world.

The letter touched Lawley with remorse, and brought him back to his stronger and better self. Nothing showed the intensity and almost insanity of his passion more than the breakdown of his strength of mind. That he, of all men, should not have had the courage to open the letter, or the fortitude to bear the bitterness of the blow alone. He must forsooth rush off to Lady Saddlethwaite, like a hurt child, and

hand her the unopened letter. And what was this horrible news which he could not read himself, or bear alone? That his dearest friend, whose murder had been horrible news to him, was alive! But the letter recalled him to himself. He was shocked with himself, ashamed, and humiliated. "You must break it to her," he said, handing Lady Saddlethwaite the letter, which, to tell the truth, she would have liked to put in the fire.

"And you?" she asked, with the deepest sympathy in her voice.

"Oh, I'm *de trop*. It's my turn to go to Australia now," he answered bitterly, rising to take leave.

"Don't go," she said entreatingly, "wait till I come back. There will be some message."

Lawley shook his head. "She will not have a thought to spare to me. I must go, Lady Saddlethwaite; I am better alone."

After Lawley had gone, Lady Saddlethwaite sat with the letter in her lap, enraged at heart. Who was this man that came in to upset her plans at the moment of their success, to disturb and destroy the happiness of the two people in which she was most interested—this dog in the manger, who showed a fine indifference to Mabel when no one else wanted her, but began to whine when she was won by another; and who showed this fine indifference not to his own feelings only, but to hers, since a telegram would have saved her all the cruel and crushing anguish she had gone through for him? Lady Saddlethwaite hadn't taken in what, however, was plainly put in the letter, that the news of his murder did not reach George until months after it had reached Mabel. Indeed, she was too thorough a woman to be just, and was really enraged with George because he wasn't Lawley. However, there was no help for it, she must herself be the instrument to unravel all the work she had painfully knit up in the last year. She must at once see Mabel, and break this thing to her, and let her be happy in her own perverse way. There was at least the consolation that the girl would be happy. Still Lady Saddlethwaite set forth on her joyous mission in not much better heart than she had gone on her mission of consolation more than a year since.

As it was past twelve before Lady Saddlethwaite reached Wefton Mabel was at home, and on seeing the carriage stop she hastened in some disquietude to meet her kind friend at the door. What could have happened to bring her in little more than three hours after they had parted? Mabel was—what with her was most unusual—nervous and unstrung, in the mood for imagining evils of all kinds. Lawley's wild raptures had frightened her. Such a love must be exacting, and what had she to pay? It was wrong to marry him—wrong to him, wrong to herself, wrong to God. And to the memory of George what was it? She read his letters over, and looked over all the relics of him she had treasured until her sorrow came upon her almost as fresh as the first day, and flooded her heart till it overflowed in unusual tears.

Traces of her trouble on her face made Lady Saddlethwaite ask the question which, at the same moment, was on the lips of Mabel.

"Has anything happened, dear?"

"No, nothing. Had you heard that something had happened to me, Lady Saddlethwaite?" asked Mabel, surprised and perplexed.

"No, dear, but you have trouble in your face. The old trouble?"

Mabel was silent. She felt that Lady Saddlethwaite would almost resent her relapse into mourning for George at the very moment of her engagement to Lawley. She was relieved when Lady Saddlethwaite said pleasantly,

"You're incorrigible, my dear; but I suppose I must let you be happy in your own way," which Mabel of course construed to mean, "if fretting is a relief to you, I mustn't scold you for it."

"You're already regretting your engagement, child?" interrogatively.

"Dear Lady Saddlethwaite, I'm regretting only my ingratitude and heartlessness. He gives me so much for—for nothing."

"You don't know how generous he is, Mabel," cried Lady Saddlethwaite impetuously. And then, after a pause, "He's been with me since we parted this morning, and asked me to come to see you." Another pause, during which Mabel was plunged in perplexity.

"He's had news from Australia, dear. Good news," she hastened to add, for the girl looked aghast at the mere name.

"Good news!"

Mabel sat, white as marble, with wide eyes and parted lips, as though she saw a spirit—George's spirit. Lady Saddlethwaite rose alarmed to ring for some wine, but Mabel clutched her dress with a convulsive grasp.

"He's not dead!" she gasped.

Lady Saddlethwaite was distressed and disgusted with her own clumsiness.

"There's a report, dear," she began hesitatingly.

"Only a report! You wouldn't bring me only a report. He's not dead!" she cried breathlessly, with a desperate intensity in her look which frightened Lady Saddlethwaite.

"No, he's not dead!" she said bluntly, thinking the shock of the truth better than the strain of the suspense. Mabel's hand relaxed its hold of Lady Saddlethwaite's dress as she fell back—not fainting—conscious, but helpless as in a dream. Lady Saddlethwaite rung the bell, and Mabel followed her movements with her eyes with the listless curiosity of a convalescent who cannot collect or concentrate his thoughts. The shock had, so to speak, knocked reason off the box, and the scattered team of her faculties wandered at will without direction or control. Jane brought in wine, which Lady Saddlethwaite administered like a medicine to her patient, and so woke her up as from sleep.

"It is true?" she asked, seizing Lady Saddlethwaite's hand, and looking up appealingly as for life into her face.

"Now, Mabel, I shall tell you nothing till you are calmer," Lady Saddlethwaite answered with calculated severity. "Let me help you to the sofa, and lie down a bit till you are more composed."

"I think I can manage that without help, dear Lady Saddlethwaite," she said, rising with an assumption of composed strength, but she had to sit down again, her head swimming, and her limbs trembling and failing her. Lady Saddlethwaite made her finish the glass of sherry and then helped her to the sofa. Mabel, laid on the sofa, did not trust herself again to speak, lest the unsteadiness of her voice would belie any assurance of calmness, but she expressed her yearning more eloquently through the pressure of Lady Saddlethwaite's hand, through her parted lips and her eyes feverishly bright fastened on her friend's face with a devouring eagerness.

"Yes, he's alive dear," said Lady Saddlethwaite in a voice that would have suited better with an announcement of death, for she could not forgive George his unconscionable resurrection. "Mr. Lawley brought the news this morning, and asked me to break it to you. There was no one to break it to him," she continued, thinking it both wise and just to divert to her displaced lover Mabel's strained attention. "I never felt so much for anyone—not even for you, dear—as I felt for him this morning. I hardly knew him, he looked so wild and haggard. He scarcely knew what he did or what he said, and could not bring himself to open the letter."

"A letter from George!" exclaimed Mabel. Alas, for Lawley! All his love and grief could not secure him now a higher interest than that of a postman. Love is as jealous and cruel as an eastern despot who slays all his kindred that he may reign in secure loneliness. Lady Saddlethwaite resented, as well she might, this insensibility to the sufferings of her ill-used *protégé*.

"Yes; a letter from Mr Kneeshaw. He wrote in good time," she said bitterly.

Mabel heard without heeding the sarcasm.

"But why didn't he write to—— why didn't he write before?"

"Why, indeed!" cried Lady Saddlethwaite, more and more embittered.

"Doesn't the letter explain?" a kind of terror in her tremulous voice. A horrible heart-sickness seized her. Was he faithless? Lady Saddlethwaite's sympathies deserted at once to her side.

"It's your letter, dear. It's all about you. You'd better read it. It can't upset you more than my bungling." She drew the letter from her pocket and handed it to Mabel. Mabel held it in her shaking hands and tried to read it, but a mist dimmed her eyes and the letters ran together. She could not read a word.

"I cannot read it," she said helplessly. "Will you read it for me, Lady Saddlethwaite?"

"There's nothing but good news in it, child. He loves you still to distraction; but he's been ill and unfortunate, and did not think it fair to keep you to a hopeless engagement."

"Oh, it was cruel," cried Mabel, trying again to read it in vain.

"Please read it for me, Lady Saddlethwaite."

Lady Saddlethwaite read the first few lines.

"What engagement?" cried Mabel, starting up into a sitting posture.

"Oh, it was some story of your engagement to Lord Charlecote that got into Galignani and was copied into an Australian paper." Mabel stood up strong with excitement.

"I must telegraph. Will you kindly drive me down to the office?"

"That's a very good idea, dear," said Lady Saddlethwaite, knowing that nothing would give such relief to Mabel as immediate action. "I shall just finish the letter and take you down with me. There, sit down, child. It won't take many minutes to read it through."

Mabel sat down and heard the long letter to the end. But when Lady Saddlethwaite had finished it, and Mabel attempted to rise, she trembled so that she could hardly stand, and was fain to sit down again.

"You will go; you will send it," she sobbed, a kind of tearless sob.

"I shall send Jane with it at once. There, lie down, dear. I shall stay with you, and Jane will take it at once." She rose and went to the table to write it.

"Tell him to come home, Lady Saddlethwaite."

"I have told him, child. He'll get it in a few hours and be here in a few weeks."

She rang and gave Jane due instructions, and nearly sent her also into hysterics with the news. But as Lady Saddlethwaite told her she must not lose a moment, the discreet Jane suppressed her feelings for the present. In a short time she came back breathless.

"Please, my lady, the post office man wouldn't send it at first. He said there must be some mistake, for he had sent it off half-an-hour ago."

"Mr. Lawley!" exclaimed Lady Saddlethwaite.

"Yes, my lady; he asked me if I wasn't Mr. Lawley's servant, but when I told him it was from your ladyship he sent it."

Yet Mabel had forgotten him.

"She will not have a thought to spare to me," he had said, and said truly.

CHAPTER XLVI.

"THE BRATTLE."

LAWLEY had an eccentric habit which had done most—next to his carelessness about money—to get him the character of being "a bit touched" among the shrewder folk of Fenton. When he couldn't sleep, either from over-smoking or over-working his brain, he would get up and go

out at all hours of the night or early morning to take an exhausting walk, and so force on sleep by means of bodily fatigue. But now sleep seemed to have gone from him altogether, and beyond recall. For two nights after the receipt of George's letter he had not closed his eyes. On the third he went to bed late—or early, rather—at about two in the morning; and, after tossing miserably for three hours, got up and went out to walk himself weary. On starting he took bye-paths, out of the track of men on the way to the mine, and girls to the factory; but as these streams ceased to flow at six o'clock, he ventured to return home by the highway, and was thereby caught in a torrent he little expected. A crowd of women, not girls, but matrons, breathless, frenzied, flying as for life, overtook him at a crossing, and swept him on with them. They were colliers' wives and mothers, and he knew at once that there had been a pit accident.

"An accident?"

"Aye."

"Where?"

"Garthoyles."

"How many down?"

"Four."

Four, indeed, was the number that this poor woman had in the pit—a husband and three sons, and she had no room in her mind for the sixty-three others who were down also. A railway accident in which twenty are killed creates a greater sensation than a pit accident in which three hundred lives are lost, because every one travels by rail, but only the poorest work in a pit. For this very reason, however, a pit accident is the most deplorable possible, since all the killed are poor, and all bread-winners; and the lighting of a pipe or the opening of a lamp desolates a whole village like an earthquake. In this case, however, it was not the recklessness of any of the sufferers, but the carelessness of the engine tender that caused the accident. The man was bemused from the effects of a drunken debauch, and overwound a heavy corve of coal which, carried over the top gearing, broke loose, thundered back down the shaft, and, crashing against some massive oaken beams more than two-thirds of the way down, shivered them to matchwood, and wrecked the lower part of the double shaft of which they were the support. More than 100 tons of earth, rock, and timber fell in and choked the shaft, cutting off not only the escape of the miners, but their air supply also, since the air trunks were wrecked. There were sixty-seven men and boys down at the time, fifty-four of them in the better-bed seam, which was forty yards below the black-bed, and was connected with it by a small shaft. Their case was desperate. Only three men would have had room to work at removing the rubbish, and these could work only at the risk of their lives, since earth and stones fell at intervals from the shattered sides of the shaft. Long before so few men, working under such difficulties, could have cleared the shaft,

the imprisoned pitmen would have been starved to death; and long before they could have been starved, they would have been suffocated, for the ventilating shaft, which was divided only by a partition from the main shaft, was choked with its ruins.

It was hopeless to attempt anything, and nothing was attempted. A few men stood silent and paralysed, looking down the mouth of the shaft; round them was a crowd of women, the wives and mothers of the doomed miners—some still, as though turned to stone, others shrieking piteously; a few besieging the engine-house and clamouring savagely for the engine tender, while those nearest the inner circle of men clutched and clung to them, asking the same question in the same words a hundred times over. A sudden and a moment's silence stilled them all when Lawley appeared. It was a touching tribute to the character he had earned for helping the helpless. There was hardly a man or woman there whom he had not helped at some time and in some way, and who had not a vague hope of help from him now. In another moment, and as they made way for him to approach the pit's mouth, the silence was broken, the women appealing to him in heart-rending tones for the lives of their sons and husbands, as if he held them in his hand.

"It's aw'r Tom; he taiched i' t' Sunday schooil."

Another, pushing her roughly aside and clutching his arm with the grip of a vice, cried in a fierce hoarse voice, "Think on, aw've nowt aboon ground nah. Aw've five dahn, do ye hear, five!"

Another, with an insane look in her eyes, pressed upon him a basket with her husband and boy's "drinking" in it, which, upon hearing of the accident, she had set to deliberately and packed. "Tak' it to 'em, wilt ta? Shoo says," nodding towards a neighbour, "they'll niver coom up agin no more."

Lawley made his way through all this misery to the pit's mouth.

"How was it?"

The pit steward told him.

"Have you been down?"

"We've lowered the bucket, sir, and it won't go much more than half-way!"

Lawley stepped into the bucket, taking a safety-lamp from one of the men. "Lower away!" he cried.

The voices of these poor women in his ears drove him upon action of some kind.

"The sides are falling in, sir!"

"Lower away!" he cried again, impatiently.

"For God's sake, Mr. Lawley——"

"I shall not stay down more than a minute, Cook. Lower quickly, and draw up quickly, when I pull the rope."

The men lowered him at first slowly, but very fast as the bucket neared the wreck. It stopped, and while it stayed below the men, as they stooped over, could hear another fall of débris. Then the rope was

chucked, and they hauled up the bucket swiftly, and Lawley soon reappeared with a very ugly gash in his forehead, from which the blood streamed down his pale face, giving him the ghastly look of a messenger of death. A groan burst from the wretched women at his appearance, from which they augured the worst.

"It's a terrible business," he said, as he reached the top.

"You're badly hurt, sir."

"No; it's nothing, thank you. How deep was the shaft?"

"Thirty yards to the black-bed, sir. Let me tie your handkerchief round it."

"Thank you. It would take ten days to clear!"

"Ten days, sir! It wouldn't be cleared in three weeks if men could go to work at it at once. But they'd have to repair the sides first before they dared put a spade into it."

Lawley sat on the bucket turned bottom upward, while Cook bound the handkerchief about his forehead. Suddenly he sprang up, dislodging the bandage and reopening the wound.

"Where does it drain into?"

"By Gow!" cried one of the men, "I believe there's a water hoile into 'the Brattle.'"

"The Brattle" was an old pit which had been worked out years ago.

Just at this moment Mr. Murgatroyd, the manager, drove up, leaped out of the dog-cart, and joined them. Cook explained the accident to him, while one of the men rebound the bandage about Lawley's forehead.

"Mr. Lawley has been down, and got badly hurt, as you see, and it's a wonder he wasn't killed. There's another!" as a sound like distant thunder came up through the shaft.

"Does it drain into the Brattle, Mr. Murgatroyd?" asked Lawley.

"Yes; but that won't help us much, the Brattle's foul as a cesspool. It hasn't been worked this twenty years."

"Does the drain come out near the shaft?"

"I can't say. It was before my time."

"Who knows anything about the Brattle?" asked Lawley of Cook. He was irritated at the calculating coolness of Mr. Murgatroyd, who, to tell the truth, was thinking more of the blame that might attach to him for the accident than of the lives of the miners.

"Bob o' Ben's has worked in it. Him that's watchman at the coal stays."

"Mr. Murgatroyd," cried Lawley excitedly, "will you order a corve and windlass to be taken to the mouth of the Brattle, and let us pick up Bob o' Ben's and drive there at once?"

"What's the use? Who'll go down when we get there?"

"I'll go."

"It's all nonsense," began the manager, piqued at the management being taken out of his hands in this way.

Lawley was a very decided person when he chose, and now life and death seemed to hang upon his decision.

"Cook," he said imperiously, "take that rope and bucket to the dog-cart. We haven't a moment to lose, Mr. Murgatroyd."

The manager, seeing that the responsibility he dreaded would be crushing if he was the means of shutting off this last chance, such as it was, followed Lawley sulkily to the dog-cart. While they were waiting for Cook to join them with the rope and bucket, Lawley again suggested that a corve and windlass be sent on at once to the Brattle, and the manager rather sullenly gave the necessary order. Then Cook joined them with the rope and bucket, and got up behind as they drove off first to pick up Bob o' Ben's. On the way, Lawley took out his pocket-book, wrote in it for a few minutes, and then asked the manager and Cook to attest their signatures. "It's my will," he said, "in case anything happens me." Whereupon the manager became amiable, reflecting that, after all, he who paid the piper might well call the tune, and that the parson was certainly paying the piper in this case. From Bob o' Ben's they gleaned (out of an immense mass of valuable but irrelevant information about his experiences, man and boy, in the coal-pits) that the watercourse came out close to the bottom of the Brattle's shaft in a direction which he made plain enough to Lawley, who had been down a pit many times before. Bob o' Ben's was of opinion that the air at the bottom of the Brattle's shaft might be pure enough for anyone else to go down, but he didn't care himself to have to do with the adventure. "He warn't paid for it," he said.

But when you did get down, Bob o' Ben's believed the next thing you would have to do would be to come up again, for the drain was sure to be too narrow, and pretty sure to be too foul, for anyone to crawl along it. With which view both Cook and the manager were disposed to agree.

"But is there any other chance for the men?" asked Lawley.

"Well, no; I can't say there is."

"And it is a chance?"

"Yes, it's a chance. Do you think, Cook, any of the men themselves are likely to know of the passage?" asked the manager of the steward.

Cook shook his head, while Bob o' Ben's was even more positive as to their ignorance. Indeed, he seemed to think no one knew anything but himself. By this time they had reached the bye path leading to the Brattle and leaving the horse in charge of Bob o' Ben's, they hurried to the pit mouth, which was covered in with planks. There was already a large crowd about it, but the corve and windlass had not yet come.

"There's not a moment to lose," cried Lawley.

"Come, my lads," said the manager, "which of you will go down?" He hoped some unmarried collier would volunteer, since his life was worth less and his experience more than Lawley's. No one spoke.

"It's all right," said Lawley, who had already taken off his coat and

waistcoat and put them and his pocket-book (in which his will was) into the manager's hands. "It's all right. If it's a fool's errand I ought to go on it myself."

In a few minutes the planks were torn up, and Cook and two other men brought the rope and bucket and safety-lamp from the dog-cart. Lawley stepped into the bucket, took the safety-lamp, and was just about to be lowered into the shaft, when a gigantic miner stepped forward, took his hand, gripped it till the blood left it and the tears came, and said—probably to encourage him—"Good-bye, sir."

It wasn't encouraging, but it was affecting, and affected many of the men. Certainly Lawley was not a cheerful picture, with the soaking bandage, like a coronet of blood, round his forehead, and his pale face all the paler for its crimson stains.

"Not 'Good-bye,' I hope, Mathew, but 'God be with you.' God bless you all!"

Those who could trust themselves to answer said, "God bless you, sir!" huskily, some of them; others were silent, but looked the blessing through tears. It was not this single act of self-devotion that so moved and unmanned them, but the life lived for others of which this act was the crown.

"Lower away, my men."

In another moment he had disappeared, and there was the silence of death while the rope was being paid out, when the bucket at last bumped the bottom, and for the first five minutes after, while they waited for the signal to draw up which most of them expected. It did not come. Whether he would not or could not give it, no one could say. He might be lying dead, suffocated, at the pit bottom, or he might be making his painful way along the drain. In the hurry of the moment they had forgotten to pre-arrange a signal to assure them of his safety up to the mouth of the drain. The suspense was great, and grew. It became intense and all but intolerable as the crowd about the pit increased enormously; and was leavened and infected by the agony of the wives and mothers of the imprisoned miners. It was nearly nine o'clock when Lawley was lowered down the shaft. An hour later two men volunteered to go down and search for him, as far, at least, as the mouth of the drain. They had first, however, satisfied themselves as to the purity of the air by lowering a naked lamp and leaving it for some minutes at the bottom. It came up still alight. Then the two volunteers were lowered, remained some minutes at the bottom, and were drawn up again. They reported that the bottom of the shaft was pure enough, but that the air of the drain was very foul. They had no doubt at all that Lawley lay dead in it, and that it would have been death to them to have searched for his body. The sensation this news created was indescribable. It was as though the vast crowd had heard of the accident then for the first time. Something between a sob and groan broke simultaneously from the men, while the women uttered shriek upon shriek.

"Silence!" cried a stentorian voice.

In a moment there was the silence that might be felt. The speaker—the gigantic miner, Mathew—lay on the ground, stooping over the pit. Suddenly he sprang up like a madman and shouted, "Hurrah! I hear them! Stop! Listen!" Every one held his breath, and every one heard the faint shout from below. "Answer it, boys!" shouted Mathew, standing on the bottom of the upturned bucket, and acting as fogleman. "Hip, hip, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!" The shout might have been heard at Wefton. Meanwhile the corve was being lowered, quick as the windlass could be unwound. It reached the bottom. The rope was chucked. It was hauled up. There were eight in it, looking as though they had come back from the grave—as, indeed, they had. White and exhausted, they could tell their story only by gasps. They had given up all hope of life as the air was fouling fast, and had all gathered together in the black-bed, or upper pit, where the air was purest, and had just knelt down to pray at the suggestion of a mere lad, one of Lawley's teachers, when the boy shrieked, and fell back almost fainting. All looked round and cried out in terror, for if ever a man looked like a spectre Lawley did, in the dim light of their failing lamps, as he came towards them, all white, in his shirt and drawers, his face like marble where it was not blood-stained. He soon reassured them, and hurrying them to the mouth of the drain, sent them all before him—the boys first and then the men. The drain was not so narrow as had been supposed, but was very long and very foul—fouler than the foulest part of the pit they had left—and seemed to strangle their strength so that they made slow way through it. They had got through, however, thank God, and here they were. By the time the first batch (who were all boys) had told their story piecemeal and incoherently, the last batch were being expected with breathless eagerness, for Lawley would be with them. The very women, with their sons and husbands just restored to them, and standing by them, had their eyes turned still towards the pit mouth.

There was some delay, or there seemed some in the deep silence and suspense. At last the signal came, and the crowd drew a long breath of relief at sight of the first wind of the windlass. There were only four to come—three miners and Lawley, and the windlass went round quickly with its light load. It was lighter even than they looked for, as there were but three in it when it came to bank—the three miners only. Lawley had not followed them out of the drain. They had shouted, but he had not answered, and could answer to no shout henceforth but the voice of the Archangel at the Resurrection. He lay dead midway in the watercourse. He had been very weak from want of food and sleep to begin with, and had been still further weakened by loss of blood, and so fell an easy prey to the breath of death in the foulest part of the drain. There was a rush of volunteers to the corve, which, filled in a moment with seven miners and a doctor, was lowered away swiftly. Then, for

half-an-hour, there was a kind of religious hush, in which those who spoke spoke under their breath. It was now as though, not a few women only, but the whole crowd had each a life dear to him at stake. All Lawley's kindnesses—and his life had been all kindnesses—came back to them vividly as the day they were done, and all looked and felt as though they stood in a sick-room where the life and death of one near to them trembled in the balance. When little more than half-an-hour had passed, the windlass was again seen to turn, very slowly this time, as doubtful what its burden would be. When it reached the top there was a wild shout of joy from those who saw Lawley, as it seemed, standing upright (for he had to be held upright to be drawn up), but in another moment the body was seen to be borne as they bear the dead. Mathew, mounting his modest pulpit, amid a hush in which every breath was held, tried to speak, but his voice broke into a sob which told his story better than words. There was an overpowering revulsion of feeling. Strong men broke down and cried like children. For hours there had been a terrible strain on the nerves of suspense, excitement, and the alternations of joy, agony, hope, and despair, and this in a vast crowd where every beat of the heart is, so to say, reverberated and magnified a hundredfold through sympathy. The effect, therefore, of this crushing blow on nerves already strained to their utmost tension was almost hysterical. The men in the inner ring, looking down on the peaceful face, which seemed asleep with its eyes open, wept without disguise or sense of shame, or self-consciousness, or consciousness of anything or any one but the dead. They were quite unnerved and helpless, and could do nothing and think of nothing; and it was a woman, strangely enough, who, with a coolness that seemed cruel, ordered the arrangements for the removal of the body. She had it laid on a door brought from a cottage near, she shrouded it with her shawl, and ordered the least exhausted of the rescued miners to bear it home, and marshalled the rest with their wives and mothers as chief mourners. The vast crowd followed silent and bareheaded. As they were passing through the little village which was the home of most of the rescued miners, the bearers stood still—broke down, indeed. The same thought at the same moment was in all their minds—that he had taken their place; that, but for the dead, there would not have been a house here without its dead. So the eight bearers, weak to begin with, broke down altogether and had to be replaced, and then the procession moved on, increasing as it went, till it reached his home—that home where, too, his only mourners were strangers he had been kind to—the little children of his hospital.

No one should judge West Riding poor on the surface, or at sight, or by a conventional standard. The woman who showed this hard presence of mind preserved the shawl like a relic, and twenty-four years later, on her death-bed, desired that it should be her shroud.

CHAPTER XLVII.

FENTON GRAVEYARD.

LAWLEY'S will was not characteristic of a misogynist. Having no near relations he divided the bulk of his property between the two women who had wrecked his life—his brother's widow and Mabel. Mabel's portion, indeed, was left to her delicately under cover to George, but it was love, not friendship, which inspired the bequest. Still more eccentric was his choice of an executor, which fell upon Robert Sagar, Esq. Lawley himself was the worst business man in the world, which will account for his idea (got from Mr. Sagar) that Bob was the best. Besides, Bob, as a kind of guardian of Mabel's, naturally occurred to a mind filled with Mabel.

It was a fortunate choice for Bob, and brought him, as we shall see, the happiness of his life.

Bob was not at the Queen when Mr. Murgatroyd—who took the liberty to read the will an hour after Lawley's death—sought him up there. However, Bob was easy to trace in Wefton, where he had attained to the celebrity of Lucian's *Οὔτος Ἐκεῖνος*! Men stopped to look at the stupendous figure as it rolled through the streets, women (Irishwomen) curtsied to him, and the street boys cock-a-doodle-dooed after him—for this had been the war-whoop of the Crowe faction during the election. Bob took it all in good and gracious part, smiling like Malvolio, unless when some miscreant made a derisive allusion to his corpulence, now—thanks to “No more Stomachs”—truly portentous. Then, indeed, Bob had to console himself with the reflection that the greatness he had achieved had its penalties no less than its privileges. But, these brutalities notwithstanding, Bob felt justified in thinking himself the most popular man in Wefton, so he walked its streets as a captain walks his quarterdeck, with an authoritative roll. Therefore Mr. Murgatroyd had no difficulty in tracking the village Hampden from the Queen's to Mabel's, where, indeed, Bob was busy adjusting a new kind of window-blind, which was to have gone up and down with a spring, but which could never be got henceforth to go either up or down at all.

Fortunately, Mabel was not in when Mr. Murgatroyd told his news. Bob was so horrified at it, and at Mabel's share in it, that he had no room in his heart for even an under thought of pleasure at the compliment paid to his business capacity—the highest possible compliment that could be paid him. He could think for the moment only of Mabel and of the best way to break the shock of the news to her. It was a kind of business for which poor Bob had the least fitness or fancy of anyone in the world; and therefore, after some perturbed thought, he rushed off, first of all, to telegraph to Lady Saddlethwaite. Then he hurried back to keep Mabel on her return from hearing the news from any less considerate friend. But when Mabel, on her return, met Bob at the door

with his kind-hearted face overcast, and as indicative of news of death as an envelope an inch deep in black, she faltered out at once, "Who is it, Mr. Sagar?" Of course she thought it was George.

"It isn't anyone," cried Bob, confused by the failure of his frank face to keep a secret for a moment. "It's Lady Saddlethwaite. I mean she's coming to see you. There; come in and sit down. It's not from Australia—it isn't, indeed," taking Mabel's hand and leading her into the room and to a chair.

"It's Mr. Lawley?" looking up into Bob's troubled face with the hopeless yet appealing look of one who pleads against a sentence he knows to be inevitable. It was a relief to be assured of George's safety, but even that relief gave place in a moment to this other and only less poignant anxiety.

"I believe he's badly hurt," said Bob helplessly; "there's been a pit accident, and he went down and saved all the men, and got cut about the head a bit, and caught by the choke-damp."

"I must go to him," cried Mabel, rising with the sudden strength of excitement and of a fixed resolution. In her mind at the moment was a letter she had written him the day after she had heard of George's being alive, a letter which soothed even Lawley's wounded spirit. It seemed to come, as it had come, hot from her heart. It was full of all he had been to her, and of all he would be ever to her, and of her own unhappiness in having so little to give in return for it all. There could not have been a more simple, touching, and complete expression of a love which was everything but what Lawley asked, and of a regret, which was all but a remorse, that it stopped short only of this. This letter was in her mind as she sprang up; its coldness, its thanklessness, its heartlessness. And now he was dying, perhaps! might die before she could see him and bare her whole heart to him, its love, and its longing to give her life for his.

There was a good deal of selfishness in these thoughts, alloying what was unselfish in them, it is true; but this is only to say that Mabel was human.

"You will come with me, Mr. Sagar?"

"He's too ill to see anyone, Mabel. He's unconscious, and the doctors are very doubtful. Now, do sit down, dear; it's no use; and Lady Saddlethwaite will be here soon," floundered Bob, more and more helplessly.

"He's dead!" cried Mabel with a wild look, as though she saw him as he lay that moment, white, still, and cold. She sat down again with this fixed, wild look still in her eyes, certain and silent—poor Bob silent also.

"If I had only seen him—only once," she moaned piteously after a while; "but he'll never know now." And, indeed, this, which was her first thought was her last thought. To the end of her life the thought of what she would consider the coldness of her last letter (and she often

thought of it) ached in her heart like an old wound. Now the shock of this terrible news broke her down completely, and she lay prostrate for weeks ill of what the doctor called a low fever.

Bob, leaving Mabel in Lady Saddletwaite's charge, thought it incumbent upon him as executor to set out in the evening for Fenton. He was really as sorry for Mabel's sorrow, and for his friend Lawley too, as any kind-hearted man could be; and yet for his life he couldn't help feeling a sense of pride and importance in his executorship stir within him when he had got over the first shock of the news; for there was nothing of which Bob had become so proud as of his business ability. He was not the first great man who thought nature meant him to walk on his head, so to speak—"Optat ephippia bos piger; optat arare caballus."

Bob then, we say, hurried off to Fenton Vicarage to look after his duties and make all the necessary arrangements for the funeral. As, however, he passed through the village and saw all the blinds down, and groups of women about the doors, and men at street corners talking together with sad face and subdued voice, he again forgot his business character and thought only of Mabel's loss and his own.

At the vicarage the McGucken met him at the door. She was a kind-hearted woman and truly attached to Lawley, but much of her grief was swallowed up by the immense consolation of the remembrance of all she had been to him and done for him, and by her indignation at the state of dirt in which the crowd had left the house.

"Coming and going as if it was a pothouse, and making no more of one than if aw war the muck under their feet. And muck enough they made, Mr. Sagar, sir, if you will me believe, and him lying dead above that couldn't bide to see a speck or spot on tile or table; and little had he seen for up aw allus war late and early, a-rubbing, and a-scrubbing, and a-tubbing, and a-sweeping, and a-polishing till my knees war that sore aw couldn't bide to say my prayers on 'em; aw couldn't. But prayers is for them as has nowt else to think on but theirsens, not for sich as has childre to follow, and a haase to tidy, and a master to do for as aw hev done for him. Niver a man in this world was better done for, that aw can say, and nobbody could say nowt else, and aw only hope he'll be as weel done for where he's goan"—a hope expressed despondently and with doubtful tears. Bob's kind heart was too much moved by the darkened house, and what its darkness symbolised and helped him to realise, for him to smile at the McGucken's doubt of Heaven being Heaven to Lawley without her.

When he had at last got rid of her, he sat sad in the still study, thinking of the last time—not so long since—he had sat there listening and learning many things from Lawley's brilliant talk. At last he rose, moved by a sudden impulse, to go and see the dead. He stole upstairs noiselessly, partly in reverence and partly to elude the McGucken's vigilance, and went on tiptoe along the corridor to Lawley's room. The

door was wide open and he paused at it for a moment, fearing the McGucken was within, but all seeming still, he entered.

It was night, the room dim, the gas down, and Bob, unused to death, stood in nervous hesitation inside the door. He could hear his heart beat, and he could hear—he was sure he could hear—in the frozen silence, from the bed where the body lay shrouded within curtains, the sound of a sleeper's regular breathing. It took him a little time to summon up courage to advance to the gas and turn it up, and then, after another hesitation, to steal to the foot of the bed. Here he was startled in a way very different from that he half expected. Lawley lay sleeping the breathless sleep; but, beside him, sharing his pillow, her face flushed insleep, all but touching his, and making it by contrast more ghastly, lay a little girl, between three and four years of age, fast asleep, her long eyelashes wet with tears, and her bosom heaving still in sleep with the swell of a storm of sobs. One word, in passing, to this little chief mourner, who was to be all the world to Bob.

She had been brought to the hospital nearly a year ago, ill mainly of starvation and neglect, from which she soon recovered. As, however, her mother was dead and her father was an irreclaimable drunkard, Lawley had not the heart to send back the bright, pretty, engaging child to misery and degradation. Even the McGucken was moved by her winning face and ways to tolerate her. She had fast grown to be such a pet with Lawley in his loneliness, that when she could elude the McGucken she would steal, sure of a welcome, into his bedroom before he was up in the morning, and in the evening, before her bed-time, into his study. The child had much of her dead mother in her—a refined and affectionate woman—and Lawley had resolved to bring the little one up to be what nature had meant her to be, a lady. As for Amy, Lawley was father, mother, sister, brother, all to her. When Sarah Jane, eager to find anyone who had not heard the news, rushed up to tell the sick children that Mr. Lawley was dead, Amy took her to mean that he was very ill. She was but a year old when her mother died, and knew not yet of death, imagining it to be simply the superlative of illness—an impression confirmed by Sarah Jane's tears.

Illness Amy knew too well, and that he should be *very ill* was terrible to her. In the confusion no one heeded her or her timid questions, and she was kept strictly confined to the hospital end of the house all that day. At night, however, when she could not sleep through thinking of this trouble, she stole out of bed and along the corridor to Lawley's room. She pushed open the door, which was ajar, crept to the bed, climbed up upon it by means of a chair, and saw by Lawley's ghastly face and closed eyes that he was very ill and asleep, and not to be disturbed. She would wait till he waked, as she had done many a morning, and while waiting and sobbing piteously over the terrible change in the face that was as the only face in the world to her, she fell asleep at last from exhaustion.

So it came about that Bob found the little flushed face, whose troubles were beginning, nestling in the shadow of the still, set, marble face, whose troubles were over. A harder-hearted man than Bob would have been touched by the picture, and by its suggestions of love and sorrow, and of all that is best in our nature and worst in our lot, and Bob was touched by it.

While he stood looking on it, hesitating to disturb the child, hesitating to leave her there, she woke from her troubled sleep, roused either by the glare of the gas or by Bob's concentrated gaze.

After a hurried look at the stranger, whom she took for a doctor, she turned at once to see if Lawley was yet awake.

"I didn't wake him," she said in a guilty voice to Bob.

"No, dear," said Bob, not steadily. "Let me carry you back to bed."

Amy looked back wistfully at the still face with half a hope that their talking might have waked him, and that she might get a reprieve, or at least a word, a touch, a look from him before she was taken away. While looking for some sign of waking she forgot Bob altogether, for the gash in the forehead, seen now in the full glare of the gaslight, had a horrible fascination for her. She sat up transfixed, a piteous picture of horror, till Bob broke the spell.

"Come, dear," taking her up in his arms.

"I may come when he wakes. I may come in the morning. He lets me come in the morning when he wakes," beseechingly.

"Ay, dear; you may come when he wakes."

All Bob's kind heart was in his face and in his voice, so that Amy, though a shy and shrinking child, put both her arms round his neck as he carried her first to the gaslight to lower it, and then from the room—her head being turned over his shoulder toward the bed and its burden to the last.

She guided him to her room, and Bob, having put her back to bed, sat by her till she should fall asleep. But she did not soon fall asleep. She lay long wide awake, though still; the pale face with that terrible gash in the forehead looking down upon her distinctly out of the darkness. Bob, hearing that she was crying quietly by an occasional sob, soothed her now and then as he could by caresses and caressing words, till at length "Nature's soft nurse, balm of hurt minds," came to relieve him.

We have dwelt upon Bob's finding of Amy because it was a fortunate accident for him. The impression she made upon him that night was more than confirmed in the next few days of her utter desolation when he had at last to make clear to her the meaning of death. Of all the bitter tears dropped on Lawley's grave, the most bitter were those shed by this little chief mourner as she looked down upon it from Bob's arms. There is no sorrow like a child's sorrow, for in its intensity it is eternal, without hope of end, break, or morrow to it. And Amy's wretchedness so

wrung Bob's heart that he begged her from George (to whose care Lawley had bequeathed her) and adopted her. No kind act was ever better rewarded. Amy, as a child, girl, and woman was henceforth the happiness of Bob's life, more to him even than his world-wide political fame as member for Bally-Banagher and leader in the House of Commons of one of the seven sections into which the union of Irish patriots of all ranks and creeds against the tyranny of the Saxon resolved itself in a single session.

Nor, in taking a kindly leave of our kind old friend, should we omit to mention a third source of his happiness, his discovery of the genuine "No more Stomachs" receipt—a sleepless attendance on the Speaker's eye in that august House:—

Where prosy speakers painful vigils keep,
Sleepless themselves to give their hearers sleep.

If Bob's vigils did not quite reduce him to "an eagle's talon in the waist," at least they relieved him of the scurrilous notice of the street boys.

A graveyard is an appropriate place for partings. There, late or soon, we part from all, or all from us. Here, then, at Lawley's grave, we take leave of others besides Bob, of Dr. Clancy, who, for his knowledge of Greek, was made a missionary bishop of the South Sea Islands; of Mr. Gant, who obtained at last the pinnacle of his ambition, persecution in its most fiery form—a prosecution for ritualistic practices; of Josiah Pickles—we beg his pardon—Sir Josiah Pickles, for his large contributions to the Carlton electioneering funds was rewarded with knighthood; and of Clarence, who married a poor but highly accomplished girl, who with one set of toes on the boards and the other set on a level with her head could spin round like a top for two minutes together.

To come lower down, for we are getting dizzy at this height, here too we take leave of Barney McGrath, who had his own good reason for the tears he was not ashamed to shed at the grave. We should have said something of the prominent part Barney took against his old enemy, Josiah Pickles, during the election, but that poor Barney was not presentable for the greater part of that time. He threw his whole soul into the work, and did Bob yeoman's service for the first few days of the canvass, but before the close of the week he was tempted into breaking the pledge. His pledge once broken he drank furiously to drown remembrance of the breach and fell into the hands of the police—this time most justly. It would have gone hard with Barney if Lawley had not overtaken him in his carriage while he was being hauled off to the station. Lawley, recognising Mabel's *protégé*, stopped, and by a generous tip induced the police to commit Barney to his charge. Barney was shoved into the carriage, driven to Fenton Vicarage, and next morning, while overwhelmed with shame, remorse, and gratitude was reconverted to temperance. Henceforth Barney worshipped him with Celtic fervour, and now lamented him with Celtic demonstrativeness. Nor did he again relapse. He prospered exceedingly as a nursery-

man, and for the seventeen years of life that remained to him kept Lawley's grave beautiful with the choicest flowers the smoke of Fenton would allow to live.

At the grave side also we take leave of the McGucken, her eyes not so blinded by tears as to prevent her noticing that the sexton blurred with three handfuls of earth the coffin plate she had burnished like a mirror. She married a scavenger, a widower, with seven children and a temper, whom it took her ten years to bury.

At the graveside too we take leave of the Fenton folk, as warm-hearted a people as ever lived. For that day the factory was still, the mine empty, the school closed, and only the bedridden left in the houses. All men, women, and little children were in the church, the churchyard and its approaches, all in black, and nearly all in tears. A hymn was to have been sung at the graveside, but the singers broke down before they had got through the first verse, and all the crowd round the grave seemed as at a given signal to break down with them. It was such a scene as no one present ever remembered or ever forgot.

Lastly, at Lawley's grave, we take leave of Lady Saddlethwaite, Mabel, and George. Two days after George's return from Australia the three drove together on a pilgrimage to the grave, marked now by a cross of white marble, erected to his memory by the miners he had saved.

It was a silent drive, for even George was thinking of something besides Mabel. As they approached the grave three colliers (one with his hat off), who had been painfully spelling out the inscription, gave place to them.

It was a long inscription, loosely worded, but with this striking line at its close, "Erected to his memory by those for whom he lived and died."

"There's no finer epitaph in Westminster Abbey," said Lady Saddlethwaite as she read out the line, and then, after a pause, she added, "An heroic death is, after all, an easy thing compared with an heroic life, and there's no life more heroic than to choose to be unheroic and obscure for the sake of obscure and unheroic people."

"It's the life of many a clergyman," said George.

"It's the loveliest of all lives," said Lady Saddlethwaite emphatically.

Mabel said nothing, but looked through tears a hope which lay still deep in her heart—the hope, or rather the faith, for it has a higher source and sustenance than hope, that he will,

Perplex in faith, but pure in deeds,

Beat at last his music out,

and find there is an honest place for him in a church which is wide enough to comprehend a Clancy, a Gant, and a Lawley.

Zoophily.

It is a comforting reflection in a world still "full of violence and cruel habitations," that the behaviour of men to domestic animals must have been, on the whole, more kind than the reverse. Had it been otherwise, the "set" of the brute's brains, according to modern theory, would have been that of shyness and dread of us, such as is actually exhibited by the rabbit which we chase in the field, and the rat we pursue in the cupboard. In countries where cats are exceptionally illtreated (*e.g.* the South of France), poor puss is almost as timid as a hare, while the devotion and trustfulness of the dog towards man in every land peopled by an Aryan race seem to prove that, with all our faults, he has not found us such bad masters after all. Dogs love us, and could only love us, because we have bestowed on them some crumbs of love and goodwill, though their generous little hearts have repaid the debt a thousandfold. The "Shepherd's Chief Mourner" and "Grey Friar's Bobby" had probably received in their time only a few pats from the horny hands of their masters, and a gruff word of approval when the sheep had been particularly cleverly folded. But they recognised that the superior being condescended to care for them, and their adoring fidelity was the ready response.*

Two different motives of course have influenced men to such kindness to domestic animals, one being obvious self-interest, and the necessity, if they needed the creature's services, to keep it in some degree of health and comfort; and the other being the special affection of individual men for favourite animals. Of the frequent manifestation of this latter sentiment in all ages literature and art bear repeated testimony. We find it in the parable of Nathan; in the pictured tame lion running beside the chariot of Rameses; in the story of Argus in the *Odyssey*; in the episode in the *Mahabharata*, where the hero refuses to ascend to heaven in the car of Indra without his dog; in the exquisite passage in the *Zend*

* A touching story of such sheep gathering was recently told me on good authority. A shepherd lost his large flock on the Scotch mountains in a fog. After fruitless search he returned to his cottage, bidding his collie find the sheep if she could. The collie, who was near giving birth to her young, understood his orders and disappeared in the mist, not returning for many hours. At last she came home in miserable plight, driving before her the last stray sheep, and carrying in her mouth a puppy of her own! She had of necessity left the rest of her litter to perish on the hills, and in the intervals of their birth the poor beast had performed her task and driven home the sheep. Her last puppy only she had contrived to save.

Avesta, where the Lord of Good speaks to Zoroaster: "For I have made the dog, I who am Ahura Muzda;" in the history of Alexander's hero Bucephalus; in Pliny's charming tales of the boy and the pet dolphin, and of the poor slave thrown down the Gemonian stairs, beside whose corpse his dog watched and wailed till even the stern hearts of the Roman populace were melted to pity.

But neither the everyday self-interested care of animals by their masters, nor the occasional genuine affection of special men to favourite animals—which have together produced the actual tameness most of the domesticated tribes now exhibit—seems to have led men to the acknowledgment of a moral obligation on their part towards the brutes. As a lady will finger lovingly a bunch of flowers, and the next moment drop it carelessly on the roadside, or pluck the blossoms to pieces in sheer thoughtlessness, so the great majority of mankind have always treated animals.

We tread them to death, and a troop of them dies
Without our regard or concern,

cheerfully remarked Dr. Watts concerning ants; but he might have said the same of our "unconcern" in the case of the cruel destruction of thousands of harmless birds and beasts, and the starvation of their young; and of the all-but-universal recklessness of men in dealing with animals not representing value in money.

It is not, however, to be reckoned as surprising that our forefathers did not dream of such a thing as Duty to Animals. They learned very slowly that they owed duties to *men* of other races than their own. Only on the generation which recognised thoroughly for the first time (thanks in great measure to Wilberforce and Clarkson) that the Negro was "a man and a brother," did it dawn that beyond the Negro there were other still humbler claimants for benevolence and justice. Within a few years passed the Emancipation of the West Indian slaves and that first Act for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, of which Lord Erskine so truly prophesied that "it would prove not only an honour to the Parliament of England, but an era in the civilisation of the world."

But the noble law of England—which thus forestalled the moralists and set an example which every civilised nation, with one solitary exception, has followed—remains even to this day, after sixty years, still in advance of the systematic teachers of human duty. Even while every year sermons specially inculcating humanity to animals are preached all over the kingdom, nobody (so far as the present writer is aware) has attempted formally to include Duty to the Lower Animals in any complete system of ethics as an organic part of the Whole Duty of Man.*

* The best effort to supply the missing chapter of ethics, is the charming and eloquent volume, *Rights of an Animal*, by E. B. Nicholson. I thankfully recognise the candour wherewith the author has tackled the difficult problems of the case, and the value of his demonstration that the law of England assumes the fundamental prin-

Without pretending for a moment to fill up this gap in ethics, I would fain offer to those who are interested in the subject, a suggestion which may possibly serve as a scaffolding till the solid edifice be built by stronger hands. We must perchance yet wait to determine what are the right *actions* of man to brute; but I do not think we need lose much time in deciding what must be the right *sentiment*: the general feeling wherewith it is fit we should regard the lower animals. If we can but clearly define that sentiment, it will indicate roughly the actions which will be consonant therewith.

In the first place it seems to me that a sense of serious responsibility towards the brutes ought to replace our "lady-and-the-nosegay" condition of *insouciance*. The "ages before morality" are at an end at last, even in this remote province of human freedom. Of all the grotesque ideas which have imposed on us in the solemn phraseology of divines and moralists, none is more absurd than the doctrine that our moral obligations stop short where the object of them does not happen to know them; and assures us that, because the brutes cannot call us to account for our transgressions, nothing that we can do will constitute a transgression. To absolve us from paying for a pair of boots because our bootmaker's ledger had unluckily been burned, would be altogether a parallel lesson in morality. It is plain enough, indeed, that the creature who is (as we assume) without a conscience or moral arbitrament, must always be exonerated from guilt, no matter what it may do of hurt or evil; and the judicial proceedings against, and executions of, oxen and pigs in the Middle Ages for manslaughter were unspeakably absurd. But not less absurd, on the other side, is it to exonerate men, who *have* consciences and free will, when they are guilty of cruelty to brutes, on the plea—not that *they*—but the brutes, are immoral and irresponsible.*

A moral being is not moral on one side of him only, but moral *all round*, and towards all who are above, beside, and beneath him; just as a gentleman is a gentleman not only to the king but to the peasant; and as a truthful man speaks truth both to friend and stranger. Just in the same way the "merciful man is merciful to his beast," as he is merciful to the beggar at his gate. I may add that every noble quality is specially tested by its exhibition in those humbler directions wherein there is nothing to be gained by showing it, and nothing to be lost by contrary behaviour.

ciple that cruelty to an animal is an offence *per se*, and that it is not necessary to show that it injures any human owner or spectator. In this respect, as in all others, our Act (11 & 12 Vict. c. 39) immeasurably transcends the French *Loi Grammont*, which condemns only cruelty exhibited in public places and painful to the spectators. Mr. Nicholson justifies Vivisection only so far as it can be rendered absolutely painless by anaesthetics. To such of us as have seen through that delusion, *cadit questio*.

* As a recent example of this doctrine, see Dr. Carpenter's article in the *Fortnightly Review* for February 1, 1882. "Is it not," he says, "the very basis of ethical doctrine (!) that the moral rights of any being depend on its ethical nature?"

There is a passage from Jeremy Bentham, quoted in Mrs. Jameson's *Common Place Book* and elsewhere, which will recur to many readers at this point. "The day may come," he says, "when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withheld from them but by the hand of tyranny. It may come one day to be recognised that the number of legs, the villosity of the skin, or the termination of the *os sacrum* are reasons insufficient for abandoning a sensitive being to the caprice of a tormentor. . . . The question is not, Can they reason? or Can they speak? but Can they suffer?"

Long before Bentham, a greater mind, travelling along a nobler road of philosophy, laid down the canon which resolves the whole question. Bishop Butler affirmed that it was on the simple fact of a creature being SENTIENT—i.e. capable of pain and pleasure—that rests our responsibility to save it pain and give it pleasure. There is no evading this obligation, then, as regards the lower animals, by the plea that they are not moral beings. It is *our* morality, not *theirs*, which is in question. There are special considerations which in different cases may modify our obligation, but it is on such special reasons, not on the universal non-moral nature of the brutes (as the old divines taught), that our exoneration must be founded; and the onus lies on us to show cause for each of them.

The distinction between our duties to animals and our duties to our human fellow-creatures lies here. As regards them both we are indeed forbidden to inflict avoidable pain, because both alike are sentient. But as regards the brutes, our duties *stop* there; whereas, as regards men, they being moral as well as sentient beings, our primary obligations towards them must concern their higher natures, and the preservation of the lives which those higher natures invest with a sanctity exclusively their own. Thus we reach the important conclusion that the infliction of avoidable Pain is the supreme offence as regards the lower animals, but *not* the supreme offence as regards man. Sir Henry Taylor's noble lines go to the very root of the question:—

Pain, terror, mortal agonies, which scare
Thy heart in man, to brutes thou wilt not spare.
Are theirs less sad and real? *Pain in man*
Bears the high mission of the flail and fan;
In brutes 'tis purely piteous.

Pain is the one supreme evil of the existence of the lower animals; an evil which (so far as we can see) has no countervailing good. As to Death—a painless one, so far from being the supreme evil to them, is often the truest mercy. Thus instead of the favourite phrase of certain physiologists, that "they would put hecatombs of brutes to torture to save the smallest pain of a man," true ethics bid us regard man's *moral* welfare only as of supreme importance, and anything which can injure it (such, for example, as the practice, or sanction of the practice, of cruelty) as the worst of evils, even if along with it should come a mitigation of bodily pain. On this subject the present Bishop of Winchester has made

an admirable remark—viz. “that it is true that Man is superior to the beast, but the part of Man which we recognise as such is his moral and spiritual nature. So far as his body and its pains are concerned, there is no particular reason for considering them more than the body and bodily pains of a brute.”

Of course the ground is cut from under us in this whole line of argument by those ingenious thinkers who have recently disinterred (with such ill-omened timeliness for the vivisection debate) Descartes' supposed doctrine, that the appearance of pain and pleasure in the brutes is a mere delusion, and that they are only automata—“a superior kind of mario-nettes which eat without pleasure, cry without pain, desire nothing, know nothing, and only simulate intelligence as a bee simulates a mathematician.” If this conclusion (on which modern science is to be congratulated!) be accepted, it follows of course that we should give no more consideration to the fatigue of a noble hunter than to the wood of a rocking-horse; and that the emotions a child bestows on its doll will be more serious than those we bestow on a dog who dies of grief on his master's grave. Should it appear to us, however, on the contrary (as it certainly does to me) that there is quite as good evidence that dogs and elephants reason as that certain physiologists reason, and a great deal better evidence that they—the animals—feel, we may perhaps dismiss the Cartesianism of the Nineteenth Century, and proceed without further delay to endeavour to define more particularly the fitting sentiment of man to sentient brutes. We have seen we ought to start with a distinct sense of some degree of moral responsibility as regards them. What shape should that sense assume?

We have been in the habit of indulging ourselves in all manner of antipathies to special animals, some of them having, perhaps, their source and *raison d'être* in the days of our remote but not illustrious ancestors,

When wild in woods the noble savage ran;

or those of a still earlier date, who were, as Mr. Darwin says, “arboreal in their habits,” ere yet we had deserved the reproach of having “made ourselves tailless and hairless and multiplied folds to our brain.” Other prejudices, again, are mere personal whims, three-fourths of them being pure affectation. A man will decline to sit in a room with an in-offensive cat, and a lady screams at the sight of a mouse, which is infinitely more distressed at the *rencontre* than she. I have known an individual, otherwise distinguished for audacity, “make tracks” across several fields to avoid a placidly ruminating cow. In our present stage of civilisation these silly prejudices are barbarisms and anachronisms, if not vulgarisms, and should be treated like exhibitions of ignorance or childishness. For our remote progenitors before mentioned, tusk and hirsute, struggling for existence with the cave bear and the mammoth in the howling wilderness of a yet uncultured world, there was no doubt justification for regarding the terrible beasts around them with the hatred

which comes of fear. But the animal creation, at least throughout Europe, has been subdued for ages, and all its tribes are merely dwellers by sufferance in a vanquished province. Their position as regards us appeals to every spark of generosity alight in our bosoms, and ought to make us ashamed of our whims and antipathies towards beings so humble. Shall man arrogate the title of "lord of creation" and not show himself at the least *bon prince* to his poor subjects? It is not too much to ask that, even towards wild animals, our feelings should be those of royal clemency and indulgence—of pleasure in the beauty and grace of such of them as are beautiful; of admiration for their numberless wondrous instincts; of sympathy with their delight in the joys of the forest and the fields of air. Few, I suppose, of men with any impressionability can watch a lark ascending into the sky of a summer morning without some dim echo of the feelings which inspired Shelley's Ode. This is, however, only a specially vivid instance of a sympathy which might be almost universal, and which, so far as we learn to feel it, touches all nature for us with a magic wand.

If we are compelled to fight with them—if they are our natural enemies and can never be anything else—then let us wage war upon them in loyal sort, as we contended against the Russians at Balaclava; and if we catch any prisoners, deal with them chivalrously, or at least mercifully. This, indeed (to do justice to sportsmen, much as I dislike their pursuit), I have always observed to be the spirit of the old-fashioned country gentleman, before the gross slaughtering of battues and despicable pigeon-matches were heard of in the land.

As to domestic animals, their demands on us, did we read them aright, are not so much those of petitioners for Mercy as of rightful claimants of Justice. We have caused their existence, and are responsible that they should be on the whole happy and not miserable. We take their services to carry our burdens, to enhance our pleasures, to guard our homes and our flocks. In the case of many of them we accept the fondest fidelity and an affection such as human beings scarcely give once in a lifetime. They watch for us, work for us, bear often weary imprisonment and slavery in our service, and not seldom mourn for us with breaking hearts when we die. If we conceive of an Arbiter sitting by and watching alike our behaviour and the poor brutes' toil and love, can we suppose he would treat it as merely a piece of *generosity* on our part, which we were free to leave unfulfilled without blame, that we should behave considerately to such an humble friend, supply him with food, water, and shelter, forbear to overwork him, and end his harmless life at last with the least possible pain? Would he not demand it of us as the simplest matter of *justice*? *

* I have endeavoured elsewhere to work out this hypothesis of an Umpire between man and brute, as a method of helping us to a solution of the problem of what are, and what are not, lawful actions on our parts towards animals. The reader who may be interested in the inquiry may obtain my pamphlet, the *Right of Tormenting*,

For those who accept the Darwinian theory, and believe that the relationship between man and the brutes is not only one of similarity, but of actual kinship in blood, it would have seemed only natural that this new view should have brought forth a burst of fresh sympathy and tenderness. If our physical frames, with all their quivering nerves and susceptibilities to a thousand pains, be indeed only the four-footed creature's body a little modified by development; if our minds only overlap and transcend theirs, but are grown out of those humbler brains; if all our moral qualities, our love and faith and sense of justice, be only their affection and fidelity and dim sense of wrong extended into wider realms,—then we bear in ourselves the irresistible testimony to their claims on our sympathy. And if, like so many of the disciples of the same new philosophy, we are unhappy enough to believe that both man and brute when laid in the grave awake no more, then, above all, it would seem that this common lot of a few pleasures and many pains, to be followed by annihilation, would move any heart to compassion. In the great, silent, hollow universe in which these souls believe themselves to stand, how base does it seem to turn on the weaker, unoffending beings around them and spoil their little gleam of life and joy under the sun!

Nothing is more startling to me than the fact that some of the leading apostles of this philosophy, and even its respected author himself, should in one and the same breath tell us that an ape, for example, is actually our own flesh and blood, and that it is right and proper to treat apes after the fashion of Professors Munk and Goltz and Ferrier. These gentlemen, as regards the poor *quadrumana*, are "rather more than kin, and rather less than kind."

For those who, whether they believe in Evolution or not, still hold faith in the existence of a Divine Lord of man and brute, the reasons for sympathy are, in another way, still stronger. That the Christian religion did not, from the first, like the Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Brahminist, impress its followers with the duty of mercy to the brutes—that it was left to a few tender-hearted saints, like S. Francis, to connect the creatures in any way with the worship of the Creator, and to the later development of Protestantism to formulate any doctrine on the subject of duty towards them—is a paradox which would need much space to explain. Modern religion, at all events, by whatever name it is called, seems tending more and more to throw an additional tender sacredness over our relations to the "unoffending creatures which He"—their Maker—"loves," and to make us recognise a latent truth in the curiously hackneyed lines of Coleridge concerning him who "prayeth best" and also loveth best "both man and bird and beast." Where that great and far-reaching softener of hearts—the sense of our own failures and offences—is vividly present, the position we hold to creatures who *have never done wrong* is always found inexpressibly touching. To be kind to them,

price 2d., at the office of the Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection, 1 Victoria Street, Westminster.

and rejoice in their happiness, seems just one of the few ways in which we can act a godlike part in our little sphere, and display the mercy for which we hope in our turn. Whichever way we take it, I conceive we reach the same conclusion. The only befitting feeling for human beings to entertain towards brutes is—as the very word suggests—the feeling of *Humanity*; or, as we may interpret it, the sentiment of Sympathy, so far as we can cultivate fellow-feeling; of Pity, so far as we know them to suffer; of Mercy, so far as we can spare their sufferings; of Kindness and Benevolence, so far as it is in our power to make them happy.

There is nothing fanatical about this Humanity. It does not call on us to renounce any of the useful or needful avocations of life as regards animals, but rather would it make the man imbued with it perform them all the better.* We assuredly need not, because we become humane, sacrifice the higher life for the lower, as in the wondrous Buddhist parable so beautifully rendered in the *Light of Asia*, where “Lord Buddha,” in one of his million lives, gives himself, out of pity, to be devoured by a famishing tiger who cannot feed her cubs, and

the great cat's burning breath
Mix'd with the last sigh of such fearless love.

We need not even copy the sweet lady in the *Sensitive Plant* who made the bees and moths and ephemeridæ her attendants:—

But all killing insects and gnawing worms,
And things of obscene and unlovely forms,
She bare in a basket of Indian woof
Into the rough woods far aloof,—

In a basket of grasses and wild flowers full
The softest her gentle hands could pull;
For the poor banish'd insects, whose intent,
Although they did ill, was innocent.

This is poetry not meant for practice, and yet even these hyperboles carry a breath as of Eden along with them. Of Eden, did I say? Nay, rather of the later Paradise for which the soul of the greatest of the prophets yearned, where “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.”

I will not attempt here to define how the sentiment of Humanity to the brutes, thoroughly ingrained into a man's heart, would make him decide the question of field sports. My own impression is that it would lead him to abandon first, and with utter disgust, such wretched amusements as pigeon-matches and *battues* of half-tame pheasants; and later, those sports in which, as in fox-hunting and coursing and duck-shooting, the sympathy of the sportsman with his hounds and horse, or his grey-

* In fact, many men who pursue such trades, notably butchers, are genuinely humane, and do their best to get through their work in the most merciful way. Several of them have recently expressed warm satisfaction on obtaining Baxter's Mask, whereby oxen may be instantaneously killed without the chance of a misdirected blow. The mask is to be obtained from Mr. Baxter, Ealing Dean, W.

hound or retriever, is uppermost in his mind, to the exclusion of the wild and scarcely seen object of his pursuit. In nine kinds of such sports, I believe, out of ten, it is rather a case of ill-divided sympathy for animals than of lack of it which inspires the sportsman; and not many would find enjoyment where neither horse nor dog had part—like poor Robertson, of Brighton, sitting for hours in a tub in a marsh to shoot wild duck, and counting the period so spent as “hours of delight!”

But there is one practice respecting which the influence of such a sentiment of humanity as we have supposed must have an unmistakable result. It must put an absolute stop to Vivisection. To accustom ourselves and our children to regard animals with sympathy, to beware of giving them pain, and rejoice when it is possible for us to give them pleasure; to study their marvellous instincts, and trace the dawns of reason in their sagacious acts; to accept their services and their affection, and give them in return such pledges of protection as our kind words and caresses,—to do this, and then calmly consent to hand them over to be dissected alive—this is too monstrous to be borne. *De deux choses l'une.* Either we must cherish animals—and then we must abolish Vivisection,—or we must sanction Vivisection; and then, for very shame's sake, and lest we poison the springs of pity and sympathy in our breasts and the breasts of our children, we must renounce the ghastly farce of petting or protecting animals, and pretending to recognise their noble and lovable qualities. If love and courage and fidelity, lodged in the heart of a dog, have no claim on us to prevent us from dissecting that heart even while yet it beats with affection; if the human-like intelligence working in a monkey's brain do not forbid (but rather invite) us to mutilate that brain, morsel by morsel, till the last glimmering of mind and playfulness die out in dulness and death;—if this be so, then, in Heaven's name, let us at least have done with our cant of “humanity,” and abolish our Acts of Parliament, and dissolve our Bands of Mercy and our 300 Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty throughout the world.

The idea of Vivisection (to use the phrase of its 3,000 advocates who memorialised Sir Richard Cross) rests on the conception of an animal (a dog, for example) as “a carnivorous creature, valuable for purposes of research”—a mechanism, in short, of nerves and muscles, bones and arteries, which, as they add, it would be a pity to “withdraw from investigation.” The crass materialism which thus regards such a creature as a dog (and would, doubtless, if its followers spoke out, be found similarly to regard a man) is at the opposite pole of thought and feeling from the recognition of the animal in its higher nature as an object of our tenderness and sympathy. We cannot hold both views at once. If we take the higher one the lower must become abhorrent in our eyes. There is—there ought to be—no question in the matter of a little more or a little less of torture, or of dispute whether anæsthetics, when they can be employed, usually effect complete and final, or only partial and temporary, insensibility; or of whether such processes as putting an animal

into a stove over a fire till it expires in ten or twenty minutes ought to be called "baking it alive," or described by some less distressing and homely phraseology.* It is the simple idea of dealing with a living, conscious, sensitive, and intelligent creature as if it were dead and senseless matter against which the whole spirit of true humanity revolts. It is the notion of such absolute despotism as shall justify, not merely taking life, but converting the entire existence of the animal into a misfortune, which we denounce as a brutal misconception of the relations between the higher and the lower creatures, and an utter anachronism in the present stage of human moral feeling. A hundred years ago, had physiologists frankly avowed that they recognised no claims on the part of the brutes which should stop them from torturing them, they would have been only on the level of their contemporaries. But to-day they are behind the age; ay, sixty years behind the legislature and the poor Irish gentleman who "ruled the houseless wilds of Connemara," and had the glory of giving his name to Martin's Act. How their claim for a "free vivisecting table" may be looked back upon a century to come we may perhaps foretell with no great chance of error. In his last book, published ten years ago, Sir Arthur Helps wrote these memorable words: "It appears to me that the advancement of the world is to be measured by the increase of humanity and the decrease of cruelty. . . . I am convinced that if an historian were to sum the gains and losses of the world at the close of each recorded century, there might be much which was retrograde in other aspects of human life and conduct, but nothing could show a backward course in humanity" (pp. 195, 196). As I have said ere now, the battle of Mercy, like that of Freedom,

once begun,

Though often lost, is always won.

Even should all the scientific men in Europe unite in a Resolution that "Vivisection is Necessary," just as all the Dominicans would have united three hundred years ago to resolve that *autos da fẽ* were "necessary," or as all the lawyers and magistrates that the *peine forte et dure* was "necessary," or, as our fathers would have done, that hanging for forgery was "necessary," yet the "necessity" will disappear in the case of the scientific torture of animals as in all the rest. The days of Vivisection are numbered.

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

* See Mr. Gurney's remarks on this matter in the preceding number of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE, and Dr. Hoggan's reply in the *Spectator* for February 11.

The Early Life of J. F. Millet.

THE artist of the *Angelus* and the *Semeur* is perhaps the painter of modern times to whom the epithet "heroic" applies most readily and fitly. His work has been described as "a painted epic," himself as "a Michelangelo of the glebe;" and to those who are in sympathy with his art and its motives, with the type and quality of his sentiment and the manner of its expression, the descriptions are only adequate, and the claims implied in them no more than just. Of course there are many to whom they must seem fantastically exaggerated. Millet has been but five or six years dead, and his triumph is but now beginning. The world has not yet had time nor opportunity to search out his meanings, which are profound—as Beethoven's were—nor to learn to understand his practice, which was peculiar—as was Rembrandt's; and for some time to come there must be picture-lovers not a few who will decline to feel interested in what he had to say, or to be at the pains of studying the terms in which he said it. There is likely to be no such dissent about the man himself; nor is it probable that there will ever be two opinions as to the interest of his life. His story is sad enough in many ways; but it is encouraging in the main, and it is eminently instructive. It may be divided into three parts: one, 1814–1837, telling of Millet's origin and education; another, 1837–1849, of his apprenticeship to art and his stay in Paris; a third, 1849–1875, of his sojourn in the Forest of Fontainebleau and his achievement as a finished and an individual artist. The last two are mainly records of production more or less unpopular, and effort more or less unsuccessful, in a worldly sense at all events; there are many such chapters in the chronicle of art, and there will certainly be many more. Of the first, the general colouring of which is one of contentment and tranquillity, the circumstances are uncommon and peculiar enough to seem worth lingering over and narrating with some fulness of detail.

I.

Gruchy is a little hamlet in the Norman commune of Greville, perched upon the iron cliffs of the Hogue, and overlooking the troubled waters of Cherbourg Roads. It was there, on October 4, 1814, that Millet was born. His birth year was the year of the Campaign of France, it will be remembered, and of the abdication at Fontainebleau; and, the true child of his time—which was one of desperate defensive wars and the agony of a great ambition, when hope and endeavour

alternated with doubt and dejection, and general distress had created a disposition to individual charity—he seems to have always retained an impression of his ante-natal circumstances. He was a man strong in heart and intellect, and noble and dignified in character, with an indomitable will and a lofty audacity of purpose. But his imagination, while it was heroic and daring, was also mystical and solemn; he perceived the melancholy of things more readily than the joy in them; his message was one of peace and of pity. He represents the full and anxious year that gave him being as it must have seemed to the strong, patient, long-suffering class from which he sprang. Genius and the artistic sentiment apart, he was a peasant of the best and highest type, with that development of certain special capacities and qualities—as quiet hardihood, tenacity under trial, and dignified and thoughtful submissiveness—which some five-and-twenty years of war and revolution and unwilling conquest might be expected to induce.

He was exceptionally fortunate in the circumstances of his early environment and the facts of his ancestry and immediate parentage. Few men have had such excellent preparation for a peculiar task, and fewer still have made so good a use of their opportunity. The bent of his genius and the nature of his function were determined for him from the first. He was a peasant born and bred, and in him the sympathies and aspirations of many generations of peasants found special expression. The several strains uniting in him—of Millet, and Jumelin, and Henry du Perron—were exceptionally choice and vigorous. His father, Jean-Louis, son of Nicolas Millet and Louise Jumelin, came of an alliance between two families of varying temperaments and widely different capacities. The characteristics of the Millets were honesty, sobriety, simplicity, and laboriousness; in the Jumelins, with all of these, there was a dash of mysticism, a note of imaginativeness, a tendency to intellectual and emotional independence. The Millets worked hard, lived cleanly and kindly, and worshipped humbly and with all their hearts; the Jumelins practised science, and essayed adventure, and were versed in theology, in the moralists, in the literature and doctrine of Port-Royal. Jean-Louis, the heir of the two houses, had the distinguishing qualities of both. Tall and straight and limber, with fine hands and mild black eyes and curling and abundant hair, he was deeply religious, very thoughtful, very earnest and serious in temper, and so pure in heart and habit that his neighbours would refrain from oaths and coarse talk in his presence. And withal he was a kind of inarticulate poet. He had a fine voice and a good ear; the quire he led and trained was famed throughout the department; his music, says Sensier, is copied out in a hand that reminds you of a mediæval scribe's. He was fond of plants and trees, and interested in the ways and characters of animals, and curiously susceptible to the influences of nature; and he was always seeking to fix, or to translate, his impressions, sometimes by modelling in clay, sometimes by carving in wood. "Vois donc," he would say to

his son, as they were walking afield, "comme cet arbre est grand et bien fait; il est aussi beau à voir qu'une fleur:"—or, as they were looking out of window after the midday meal, "Vois donc comme cette maison à moitié enterrée derrière le champ est bien; il me semble qu'on devrait la dessiner ainsi." Of this good man's wife, *née* Henry, or Henry du Perron, nothing is recorded but that she came of a family of yeomen many generations old, and was a woman of exemplary life and a beautiful disposition. With her, as with her husband, devoutness was second nature. They were pious and charitable, as they were hardworking and thrifty and affectionate, without effort and without afterthought. They were poor, but they gave freely of their substance, and would accept of none but honourable gains. They were hardly literate, but they knew the Bible by heart, and Augustine and Jerome were household oracles with them. They worked as only French peasants can and do, but they remained generous and unsophisticated always; and when, years afterwards, Madame Millet writes to her son in Paris, she is found expressing herself in terms and with an accent that recall the mothers of antiquity. Nor were they alone in virtue among the members of their household. Had they stood in need of examples, they would have found them without crossing their own threshold. Domesticated with them were the painter's great-uncle, the Abbé Charles Millet, and his grandmother Louise. The Abbé, a man of great simplicity and sweetness, and of enormous personal strength, had been eased of his functions by the operation of the Revolution, and, after having been hunted for his life, had settled quietly down to till the fields he had been used to bless. He was a kind of ideal country curate, three parts labourer and one part churchman—a half-heroic *bête du bon Dieu*, one of the draught oxen of the Church; taking a pride in building walls and dykes, without help, of stones that he only could lift; teaching stray urchins their accidence and their catechism for the love of God, and to keep them out of mischief; watching over his infant grand-nephew with the imperturbable and slow solicitude of an animal for its young. The grandmother was of another temper. She was a woman of singular piety and humanity, and, for all her fervent Catholicism, a kind of unconscious Pantheist, who saw the Deity in all created things, and his action in all natural and human incidents. She had a great deal of character and intelligence, her culture was exceptional, she was full of morality and good counsel, hers was an enterprising and commanding personality; in another state of life she would certainly have been a personage of mark. She was the artist's god-mother; and she named him François after her patron, the good saint of Assisi, the lover of nature, the open-air apostle, the evangelist of the birds—as fortunate and appropriate a protector for a landscape painter, I think, as could well be found in the calendar. He was her special charge for many years, and her character and teaching were among the best and most active influences of his life. One of his earliest recollections is of a bright morning when she came and roused him from sleep,

saying to him, with gentle and loving reproachfulness, "Si tu savais comme il y a longtemps que les oiseaux chantent la gloire du bon Dieu;" and in 1846, she writes to him of the *St. Jerome* he is painting, and bids him "work for Eternity" always. "Pour quelque raison que ce puisse être," she adds in her antique and simple French, "ne te permets jamais de faire de mauvais ouvrages, ne perds pas la présence de Dieu; avec saint Jérôme, pense incessamment entendre la trompette qui doit nous appeler au Jugement." Her life and conversation were of a piece with these counsels; and Millet, who was passionately and devoutly attached to her, may well have had her in his mind when he painted and etched the third and eldest of his *Glaneuses*: the three majestic and mystical figures—as of priestesses upon a sacred beach, gathering the pebbles for some lofty and momentous act of divination—the "Parce of Poverty," as they have been called, in which he has embodied all the solemn and pathetic beauty and all the old-world dignity and romance of the gleaner's toil. His work, indeed, may be described as in some sort an expression of ideas that, in a greater or less degree and in one or another form, were common to the three or four of his immediate kindred of whom I have spoken. It is hard to believe that they would not have understood his greater pictures better than did, or could, the most enthusiastic of his critics. He dealt with facts they knew in a spirit that, elevated and ennobled as it had come to be, was, after all, the same with that in which they wrought out their own fortunes and lived their own lives. To me, indeed, they have a sort of share in Millet's whole achievement; for I cannot but think his character and genius, original and personal as they were, to have been largely inherited from them, and to have been deeply moulded and permanently impressed by them as well; so that they may, in a certain sense, be said to have been as much his masters as Poussin and Michelangelo themselves.

It is the same with his early environment as with the facts of his kinship. Walter Scott himself, the most fortunate of scholars, was not so well placed for the study of Border lore and Border character as Millet for the study of the external aspects and the inner meanings of peasant life. At Gruchy, between the green and pleasant Norman landscape and the solemn and mysterious seas, manners were simple, and life was earnest and hard. The villagers tilled their own little plots for food, spun their own linens, coopered their own tubs and pails, and carpentered their own tools and furniture. In summer time they lived much in the open air. On winter nights they gathered round the fire to sew and spin and work in wicker, and to tell old stories and sing old songs. They were no fishers. If they harvested the sea it was for weed and drift,* wherewith to fatten their fields and feed their hearths.

* Some of them made money now and then as smugglers' labourers. The contraband trade was still profitable; the Channel teemed with knavish luggers and sloops;

For they were essentially a race of husbandmen, and they had enough to do with reaping and shearing, and grafting and harrowing and delving, and the hundred other tasks of rustic labour. Of late the farmer and his lot have suffered change. Science has come to him, and steam, and machinery—"the Divil's oân teâm." He has grown positive and professional; and his trade, the oldest trade of all, has lost its antique airs of naturalness and individuality. In Millet's day its associations were yet biblical and solemn, its practice was yet personal and traditional. The sower still went forth to sow; and the painter's own *Semeur* is in some sort an illustration of the matter and spirit of the admirable line,

Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks,

of Robert Burns. The sentiment of gleaning was practically the same that it had been with Naomi and Ruth. The corn was reaped with sickles, and threshed upon a floor with flails, and ground into flour between stones under the impulse of water or of wind. The art of ploughing was human and majestic; and it was natural to see, upon some brown upland slopes, or far away on the luminous level of the plain, that noblest of all the sights of labour—a ploughman working with his team, the stately pacing horses, the shining shares, the alert and busy following of birds, the straight furrows lengthening and multiplying under the workman's will. The elemental forces were romantic and passionate as of yore; and to the shepherd watching his flock by night the darkness had all its terrors yet, and there was a mystical and sacred quality in the inexplicable stars. Ghostly presences were still formidable and dreadful, so that doubtfulness and awe came with the shadows, and the dawning light gave argument for gratitude and joy. Millet was reared upon the Bible, the most open-air of books, and bred to open-air employment under all the old solemn and picturesque conditions. Hardly had he entered upon his teens ere he went to work in the fields; and till two or three and twenty he was to all intents and purposes as diligent and complete a husbandman as Burns himself. During infancy, that is to say, and during youth and early manhood, while his imagination was at its quickest and freshest, and while his sympathies were readiest and most receptive, he was engaged in assimilating a world of sincere and memorable impressions. With the innumerable details of country life and labour he was familiar, both physically and intellectually, from the very first. He grew up among them, and took part in them; they entered into and became a portion of his being; he learned by actual experience to apprehend and express the peculiar sentiment of

and on dark and moonless nights, when cargo could be run, there was plenty of work for long-shore hands all down the coast. It is characteristic of the Millets that they would not meddle with this traffic, and would neither deal in smuggled wares nor handle smugglers' wages. They were strict, too, in the matter of wreckage, and would have nothing whatever to do with it.

each, as he learned to master its peculiar practice ; they were elements in an unconscious education of uncommon breadth and thoroughness, and they became the sole material of his art. It is not too much to say of him that, given the circumstances of his breeding and training, he could not have painted otherwise than he did. His work is the natural outcome of his life. He was in heart and mind the painter of the *Semeur* and the *Angelus* ere he quitted Gruchy ; he was "Millet le Rustique" while he was yet a labourer on his father's land.

II.

He has left some pleasant memoranda on his younger years, so that the nature of his surroundings and the tenour of his occupations are easily explained. He was the second child in a family of eight : his elder being the beloved sister Emilie, of whose death he has written so simple and touching an account, and who, until he left Normandy for Paris, was the dearest of his companions and friends. She was a good creature, it would seem—pious, diligent, fine-tempered, careful ; the model of what an elder sister should be. Millet has sketched her sitting at her wheel, in sabots and a linen cap, and in the short homespun skirts and quaint bodice of her country and class, and differing in no respect from the heroines of his most imaginative work ; and the portrait, of which the chief qualities are truthfulness and a tender melancholy, is like a page from the painter's early story. In after years he appears to have looked back upon his childhood and his youth as the only happy parts of his life. His memories were clear, definite, and pleasing ; he wrote them down affectionately and well, as if the task were a pleasure to him, and he felt himself a boy again in doing it.

Jean-Louis Millet tilled his own land, and had labourers in his employ to help him with the work. The farm-house in which he lived was rude enough in its way, no doubt, but there was always plenty to do in it, and there was always plenty to eat. In the garden was a great laurel tree by which Jean-François was always greatly impressed, and which he regarded as in some sort worthy of Apollo himself. An elm hard by the cottage divided his worship with the laurel, and afforded him matter for infinite meditation. "Mon vieil orme," he writes to Sensier when over fifty years old, "commence déjà à être rongé par le vent. Que je voudrais bien pouvoir le dégager dans l'espace comme mon souvenir le voit. O espaces qui m'ont tant fait rêver quand j'étais enfant, me sera-t-il jamais permis de vous faire soupçonner !" That was the way in which he looked at nature from the first, and the way in which he prepared himself for his splendid share in the development of modern art. The glimpses of life in his father's house which he gives us elsewhere are cheerful and moving. "Je me rappelle," he says, "m'être éveillé un matin dans mon petit lit en entendant des voix de gens qui causaient dans la chambre où j'étais. Parmi les voix il se faisait une espèce de ronfle-

ment qui s'interrompait de temps en temps. C'était le bruit d'un rouet, et les voix étaient celles des femmes qui filaient et cardaient la laine. La poussière de la chambre venait danser dans un rayon de soleil qui entraient par la fenêtre étroite et un peu haute qui donnait toute seule du jour à cette chambre." In one corner of the room, he adds, was a big bedstead, with a striped coverlet of brown and red, "retombant jusqu'à terre;" and against the wall stood a tall brown cupboard. That is one of the earliest of his definite recollections. Mingled confusedly in his mind were vague memories of the time between sleeping and waking, and its many morning sounds:—"le va-et-vient qui se fait dans une maison, les cris des oies dans la cour, le coq qui chantait, le bruit du fléau dans la grange." Adventures and experiences were not wanting later on. Once, when three new bells were waiting to be christened and hung in the village belfry (the old ones had been taken away and cast into cannon), he went with his mother and a little girl named Julie Lecacheux to see them in the church. All his life long he remembered the feeling of wonderment he had when he found himself in a place "aussi épouvantablement vaste que l'église," which seemed to him "plus immense qu'une grange," and his admiration of the great windows with their diamond panes and leaden lattices. The bells, too, looked formidable and gigantic; and when Julie Lecacheux was so bold as to rap the biggest of them, which was taller than he was himself, with the church key, it gave forth a noise that filled him with amazement, and that he never forgot. He was much abroad with his uncle, the Abbé Charles, whom he plagued unmercifully, and whose despair and delight he was alternately. The pair would go visiting together at the great houses in the neighbourhood, where the old curate was well known and greatly regarded. At one of these he saw two peacocks, before whose tails he fell into a kind of ecstasy, which was increased when the lady of the house presented him with a slice of bread and honey and an inestimable and most gorgeous feather. At another, he was sometimes allowed to gather fir cones and take them away with him: "ce qui me causait une grande joie." As a rule, he seems to have been a solemn and diligent kind of urchin; but on one occasion, which he never forgot, he was guilty of chattering during mass, and when his uncle came forward to take him from his seat and set him on his knees, under a lamp in the quire, to do penance for his crime, he was so unfortunate, by some mischance or other, as to catch his foot in the good man's surplice, and to rend the garment badly ere he could extricate himself from its folds. The consequences of this dreadful deed, which the Abbé looked upon as deliberate and intentional, were terrible. "Accablé de l'acte impie que je venais de commettre," says Millet, "il me laissa sans me donner la punition pour laquelle il s'était dérangé, et retourna s'asseoir à sa place, où il resta plus mort que vif jusqu'à la fin de la messe. Je n'avais aucune espèce de conscience de l'énormité que j'avais commise; je fus donc bien étonné, tout le monde rentré de la messe, lorsque mon grand-oncle se mit à raconter (encore sous le coup de son

émotion) à toute la famille l'abominable action que j'avais commise sur sa personne, et qu'il ne balançait pas, je crois, à considérer comme une espèce de sacrilège. Un tel acte commis sur un prêtre lui faisait présager pour mon avenir les plus effroyables choses. Dire de quel air consterné toute la famille me regardait ne serait pas possible. Le fait est que je ne comprenais pas comment j'étais devenu tout d'un coup un objet d'horreur, et que mon trouble n'aurait pas pu être plus grand." The Abbé, who appears to have taught Millet his letters, died when his pupil was seven years old; and Millet remembered how, the day of his uncle's death, the servant came to fetch him home from school, that he might not shame the family by playing and shouting through the street with his schoolfellows. Another memorable circumstance occurred the day of the Abbé's funeral, when the little boy heard folks talking secretly and stealthily of the way in which they had arranged to fortify the new-made grave. There were to be big stones about the head of the coffin, it appeared, and a couple of trusses of hay over all:—"car, disait-on, c'est ce qui leur donne le plus d'embarras. Leur outil s'embarrasse d'abord dans les bottes de foin, et après, il se brise entre les pierres, ce qui les empêche de pouvoir crocheter la tête et de tirer le corps hors de la fosse." He did not know to whom the "leur" of this sentence referred, nor could he understand why a posse of labourers and friends, armed with guns and flails, should have spent several nights in succession drinking mulled cider and watching the Abbé's tomb. Afterwards he learned that they were on the look-out for body-snatchers. These ruffians, it seemed, were in the habit of coming in the night with long screws, which they planted from above in corpses newly earthed, and so screwed them gently from their graves. Belated villagers had often come upon them on their way from the churchyard, supporting their prey between them as if it were alive and drunk, and they were merely engaged in helping a fellow-creature in distress; or carrying it away *en croupe* on horseback, heavily cloaked, and with its arms tied round the rider's waist:—"mais on voyait les pieds qui passaient au-dessous du manteau." On grim stories of this sort, on legends of ghosts and wild rumours of goblins and fairies—one is sure that the romance of the Witch of Endor was a special favourite—the lad was nursed and reared. An old book, called the *Tableau des Visions Chrétiennes*, containing, he says, "les opinions d'un tas de casuistes sur une infinité de choses qui se passeront dans l'autre monde," was constantly in his hands; it had for him the fearful charm that Stackhouse's *History of the Bible* had for Charles Lamb. He was always a lover of ghosts, and to the day of his death he could never confidently say that he was not a believer in them, too. To me it has always been a matter of regret that he did not sometimes paint them. With his astonishing sense of atmospherical mystery and romance, his solemn and grandiose imagination, his unequalled capacity for the portraiture of gesture, he might, I think, had he been so minded, have produced a *Samuel and Saul*,

for instance, or a *Meeting of the Weird Sisters*, that would have proved a new and heroic development of the supernatural in art. The one essay, however, which he made in this direction, the tremendous *Le Bûcheron et la Mort*, turned out, so far as the Salon and the public were concerned, an utter and disastrous failure. The jury refused to give it a place in the exhibition; and though many of the critics—Alexandre Dumas among the number—took up the painter's cause, and proclaimed the merits of his work incomparable, he had considerable difficulty in finding a buyer, and was glad in the end to sell his picture for such a paltry sum as 40*l*. It is not surprising, after all, that with the exception of a strange and moving drawing of the *Ascension* the *Bûcheron et la Mort* should remain the painter's only achievement in legendary art.

In the matter of formal education his opportunities, irregular as they were, were in some sort good and fortunate: as even Mr. Ruskin has deigned resentfully enough to allow; and while he could he made a right use of them. At school he learned but little. His handwriting was fair and neat, and he could read anything; but he could get nothing by heart, and in arithmetic he never advanced beyond simple addition. He was better in the playground than at the desk, and he won his first fight gallantly enough. It came off as soon as ever he became a schoolboy. His fellows picked out a champion, put a straw on his shoulder, and dared the new comer to knock it off. This he did forthwith, and the consequences were battle and victory. His backers were much pleased with him. "Millet," they said, "n'a que six ans et demi, et il a battu un garçon de plus de sept ans." It was not until his twelfth year that he began to work hard at his books. Then, however, he had to prepare for his first communion, and in doing so he won the heart of the Abbé Herpent, the young priest who was teaching him his catechism, and fitting him to take the sacrament. The Abbé urged him to learn Latin; and though Millet at first declined to do so, inasmuch as he had to be a labourer and not a priest, he had in the end to sit down to his accidence, and to grind away at his *Selectæ e Profanis* and his *Epitome Historiæ Sacre*. Presently, however, he fell upon the old Desfontaines' edition, in Latin and in French, of the *Bucolics* and *Georgics*, and had a revelation of the heroic in art, and of that epic quality in rustic life of which his own work was afterwards to present so many striking and lofty examples. Certain verses affected him prodigiously; and Virgil became a chief influence in his life, to be studied continually in the original tongue side by side with the Vulgate itself. Meanwhile the Abbé Herpent had removed to Heauville, a hamlet at some little distance from Gruchy, and had taken Millet with him. The boy, however, was a lover of home and of his kinsfolk, and for the five or six months over which his exile extended was fond of likening himself to Ovid among the Goths. On his return to Gruchy he began to read Latin with the Abbé Lebrisseux, who had succeeded the Abbé Herpent in his ministry, and found in him

a firm and kindly friend. Between them, they remind one of Wordsworth,—with whom Millet has so much else in common—and his colloquies with old Matthew :—

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

Millet at this time was an interesting child enough. A man visiting in the neighbourhood, a professor from Versailles, described him, indeed, after a day's talk with him, as "*un enfant dont l'âme était aussi charmante que la poésie elle-même.*" Such as he was, he was never weary of questioning and confiding in the good Abbé Lebrisseux; and the Abbé for his part loved nothing better than to speak with the solemn, imaginative boy who at an age when others of his state in life were intent on nothing higher than chapman's literature, or the adventures of the Sons of Aymon, was deep in Virgil and in Job, and had thoughts of his own about the wandering, inexplicable sea, the pageant of the seasons, the mystery of sailing clouds and running waters, and all the majesty and romance of inanimate nature. There is no doubt that he recognised his pupil's genius, and there is none that, if he delighted in considering and developing it, he was often anxious and often troubled when he came to think of what the world would make of it. "*Va, mon pauvre enfant,*" he would sometimes say, "*tu as un cœur qui te donneras du fil à retordre; va, tu ne sais pas ce que tu souffriras.*" That was unhappily prophetic. But the evil days were as yet far off; and the future sufferer had naught to do for the moment but to feed his mind on great thoughts and good literature, and strengthen his body by toiling at his father's side in the fat Norman fields and meadows, to help to get bread for his seven little brothers and sisters.

He was never what is called cultured, but all his life he was a reader, and what he read he read well. At Gruchy he studied Virgil and the Bible, as I have already noted, with especial ardour and intention; but he grew conversant as well with authors like Arnault and Nicole, like Fénelon and Bossuet, like Jerome and François de Sales, like Augustine (in the *Confessions*) and Pascal, La Fontaine and Charron and Montaigne. During his apprenticeship at Cherbourg, his appetite for books appears to have been insatiable. His list of authors ranges from Shakespeare and Homer away to Paul de Kock and American Cooper. He knew Byron and Scott and Chateaubriand; he was deep in Schiller and Uhland and Bürger; he read Goethe and Corneille, and he read Hugo and Beranger; he was already versed in literature of many sorts—in the masterpieces of classicism and the lucubrations of romanticism alike—when he started for Paris, to worship the old masters in the Louvre, and to learn painting under Paul Delaroche. Years afterwards he is found delighting in Burns and in François Hugo's translation of Shakespeare, and projecting a version, informed with the authority of his own prac-

tical rusticity, of one of the Theocritean idylls. For the rest, his taste in literature was exceptionally sound. In his choice of books, as in his life and work, he was emphatically the "Jupiter en Sabots" of Gérôme's description. He liked nothing that was not strong and sincere. Affectation, corruption, falsehood, effeminacy, were eminently displeasing. He had as hard a word for the random cynicism of Musset as for the pictorial mummeries of Delaroche and the Devérias; he believed as little in the renovated maidenhood of Hugo's Marion Delorme as in the lackadaisical seuality of Ary Scheffer's Francesca de Rimini. He affected the heroic in letters, and was as passionate a worshipper of Homer and Shakespeare as of Jeremy and Isaiah themselves, divinely important in his belief as they were.

III.

Millet's artistic education appears to have been almost as informal in its beginnings as was the education of his mind. He was interested in the forms of things, and their relations to each other and to their surroundings, from the first, and he was young indeed when he began to draw. His first notions of design were derived from the prints in an old Bible. These he reproduced in pencil upon paper, or with chalk upon doors and shutters, as best he might; and no doubt he learned much from them. Not for nothing, however, was he a born great painter, and a student of Virgil and the Scriptures withal. He soon became dissatisfied with the imitation of other people's ideas, and anxious to express his own; and he took to drawing from nature. Of an afternoon, while his father slept—or feigned to sleep, the better to watch him at his work—he would sit at the window and sketch the open landscape without. He drew his father's horses and his cows and sheep. He made studies of trees, and studies of carts and ploughs. He reproduced on paper the house and the stables, the ivy on the wall, the dandelions in the grass, the fowls that fussed about the farmyard, the geese in the pond, the clouds in the sky, the waves on the sea; and his people were soon proud of him. One day he walked home from mass behind a bent and decrepit old man, and as he walked he studied the crooked spine, deflected at an angle from the point of curvature, and thrusting the head far forward from the centre of gravity. When he got home he took a piece of chalk and drew what he had seen upon the wall. It was a portrait *vu de dos*, and so like that every one could swear to the original. What was of more consequence was that from that time forth the young man had a clear and workmanlike understanding of the principle of foreshortening. I may note in this connection that it was always Millet's way to find things out for himself, and to be extremely jealous of restraint and suspicious of authority. "Je suis venu à Paris," he says of himself at three-and-twenty, "avec mes idées toutes faites en art, et je n'ai pas jugé à propos de les modifier." That sentence gives the measure of the man. He had not seen a dozen good pictures in his life when he had to make

his choice between the old masters in the Louvre and the moderns in the Luxembourg; but he put aside the little talents for the men of genius as promptly and decisively as if he had been trained in the studio of Rembrandt himself. His master, Delaroche, considering the first study he produced, opined that he had painted much and often, when, as a matter of fact, he had never taken brush in hand before. It is evident that if he had failed to do great work he would have belied his destiny.

We may be sure that the portrait in chalk was seen and applauded by all the hamlet, and that the wisdom of keeping the artist at the ploughtail got to seem very questionable. Millet was about eighteen years old, and the feat, which was sufficiently surprising, appears to have made his father more anxious about the future than ever. It is not, I think, to be wondered at if the Millet family met often in council on the matter, or if, after many months of argument and doubt, Jean-Louis Millet at last determined to make his son a painter in right earnest, useful as he was upon the farm, and large as was the household whose bread he had helped so long to win. "Mon pauvre François," he said, "je vois bien que tu es tourmenté de cette idée-là : j'aurais bien voulu t'envoyer faire instruire dans ce métier de peintre qu'on dit si beau, mais je ne le pouvais; tu es l'aîné des garçons, et j'avais besoin de toi; maintenant tes frères grandissent, et je ne veux pas t'empêcher d'apprendre ce que tu as tant envie de savoir. Nous irons bientôt à Cherbourg; nous saurons si tu as vraiment des dispositions dans ce métier pour y gagner ta vie." This manly and touching little speech (which Millet's biographer declares authentic) gave France her greatest painter. The young man at once produced a couple of drawings, to take, as specimens of his skill, to Cherbourg. Both were compositions, and in both he foreshadowed himself as he was presently to be—the Millet, that is to say, of the *Berger au Parc* and the *Grande Tondeuse*. "Vous connaissez mon premier dessin," he wrote long afterwards to his friend and biographer, "fait au pays, sans maître, sans modèle, sans guide; il est encore là dans mon atelier; je n'ai jamais fait autre chose depuis." In one of these works a shepherd played upon a pipe among his sheep, while his comrade lounged and listened hard by; the costume was that of Gruchy, the scene was one of the fields on Millet's own farm. In the other, in darkness under a starry sky, a peasant stood at his cottage door giving bread to a beggar; underneath was inscribed a verse from the Vulgate according to St. Luke. They were certainly most striking work; for old Mouchel, the painter in Cherbourg, to whom Jean-Louis Millet submitted them for inspection, after flatly refusing to believe that the young bumpkin he saw before him could possibly be their author, turned round upon the anxious father and threatened him with eternal damnation for having kept a son with the makings of a great painter in him so long from labouring at his true vocation. In this way Millet's fate was decided. He became Mouchel's pupil, and spent two months with him, drawing from the cast and copying engravings,

Mouchel was an oddity in his way. He had been educated for the priesthood, but he had married and settled down to gardening and painting. He hovered continually between the practice of scepticism and the practice of piety—between open warfare with all the priests in the neighbourhood and the production of altar pieces, which he bestowed on any curate who might happen to be in want of one. He was a lover of animals, and spent hours in communion with a favourite pig, whose conversation he declared he perfectly understood, and for whose opinions he professed a great respect. Odd as he was, however, he had a right taste in art, for he worshipped Rembrandt, and was an ardent admirer of Brauwer and Teniers. He showed, too, a good deal of sound sense and discrimination in dealing with his new pupil, whom he refused to advise in any way: merely telling him to do exactly as he pleased, draw what he pleased, work how he pleased, go and come when he pleased, and make the best use he could of the materials at his disposal. Millet, as I have said, was suspicious of precept and example; and I doubt not that he obeyed his teacher to the letter. Things might have gone on in this way for a long time; but in 1835, some two months after the eventful journey to Cherbourg, Jean-Louis Millet died of brain fever, and the student had to return to Gruchy. He had resolved to give up art, and take his place as the head of the family, and work for his brothers and sisters; but of this his mother and grandmother refused to hear. The dead man's will, they said, was sacred to them. It had been the wish of his life that his son should be a painter, and it was not for them to set that wish aside. Matters must be with them as they might; they would do the best they could; Millet must return to Cherbourg and study his art. And this, after some debate, he did. He had been seen at work in the picture-gallery; many people had conceived an interest in him and in his prospects; and he was soon a student under the local artist. The local artist, whose name was Langlois, and who had been a pupil of Gros, showed himself as cautious in his dealings with Millet as Mouchel himself had been, though probably for very different reasons, and on very different grounds. He made him copy some of his old teacher's academical studies and some replicas of famous pictures; and he sent him back to work in the picture-gallery. There Millet produced a copy in crayons, 6 ft. long and 5 ft high, of Jordaens' *Adoration of the Magi*; with studies after Van Loo, Philippe de Champagne, Schidone, Van der Mol, and some of the older Flemings. And in 1837, on Langlois' recommendation, the municipal council allotted him a yearly pension of 400 francs—afterwards increased to 1,000 francs by the Council General of La Manche, and very seldom paid in full or up to date—and despatched him to Paris to finish his studies under Paul Delaroche, the idol of the Philistines, the stagiest of painters, the master whose art is to his own much as is *Hernani* to *King Lear*, or the *Book of Mormon* to the *Book of Job*.

He was eager, and yet afraid and doubtful. Paris, just then the

theatre of a noisy and successful revolution in æsthetics, was to him "le centre de la science et le musée de toutes les grandes choses ;" and he was impelled to adventure himself in it as by the promptings (he says) of a familiar spirit. All the same it was with many tears and misgivings—"le cœur bien enflé"—that he left his people and his home. The journey was all by broad, straight highways, between interminable rows of trees, and through vast flats of pasture :—"si riches en verdure et en bestiaux qu'ils me semblaient plutôt des décors de théâtre que de la vraie nature ;" and it only served to increase his sadness. It was a January evening when he alighted. The lamps were dim with a foul fog ; the streets were heavy with slush and dirty snow. The air, the smells, the clamour of wheels, the lights and voices and footsteps were too much for him, and he wept aloud in the street. He bathed his face at a fountain and went and munched an apple—a Gruchy apple!—before a printseller's window. It was full of Gavarnis and Devérias, of cheap sentiment and specious immodesty, and was more repulsive to him than the roaring streets themselves. He went off to bed in a cheap lodging house, and lay all night a prey to monstrous and affecting dreams : sometimes of his mother and grandmother weeping and at prayer for him ; and sometimes of pictures ablaze with colour and form—"que je trouvais si belles, si éclatantes qu'il me semblait les voir s'enflammer dans une gloire, et disparaître dans un nuage céleste." In the morning he awoke to shudder at the vileness and squalor of his room, and gradually to grow calm and determined once more. But his melancholy abided with him, and he mourned for himself in the words of Job, "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, *There is a man child conceived.*"

These were his first impressions of Paris and the world. It was as if he had had a presentiment of the forty years of misery and derision and uphill battle their conquest was to cost him.

W. E. H.

Living Death-Germs.

THE conquests made by science are varied in character, sometimes seeming to promise a domain more hurtful (on the whole) than fruitful; a sort of intellectual Afghanistan. In other cases a land of promise seems before us, but the way to it is not clear. As an instance of the former kind, may be mentioned the progress which science is making in the study of explosive substances and the recognition of their power. Of the latter kind no more marked instance could be cited than the researches of Pasteur and others into the nature of the germs of various diseases, and the power of cultivating these germs so that their character may be modified.

Let us for a moment suppose it proved (though at present we have only promise of proof) that the disease-germs which produce vaccinia (the disease—if so it can be called—following vaccination) are the same in species as those which produce small-pox, but that during the residence of those germs in the heifer their power has undergone a certain modification which renders them innocuous, while yet they produce that particular change which results in what we call protection from small-pox. Then it would follow, as at least highly probable, that in the case of any other illness produced by living germs, we may learn how the disease-germs can be so cultivated as to lose their power for serious mischief, while retaining the power of producing protective ailment akin to the more dangerous illness produced by the unmodified germs. So that typhus, scarlet fever, diphtheria, and a host of other ailments, which are more or less certainly known to be due to the presence of living organisms in the blood or tissues, would be treated as we now treat small-pox. People inoculated with the specific "matter" for each of these diseases, once perhaps in every six or seven years, would be safe from them, or safe at any rate from severe attacks. Epidemics of such diseases would be rendered almost impossible; but when they occurred sensible people could find protection even as they now find protection from an epidemic of small-pox. Of course there would follow effects similar to those which have led many to imagine that vaccination has done more mischief than good, because so many weakly lives which would otherwise have succumbed to the unmodified disease have been saved. Just as in a race of warlike savages the type is improved by the constant weeding out of the weaker in battles and through the hardships of campaigning, so in a people exposed to many dire forms of disease the stronger only survive, and the race seems improved. But precisely as men of sense would

object to see their nation improved in physique by the thinning out resulting from constant wars, so should they advocate every method by which the action of the more fell diseases may be modified, even at the risk of the survival of many weaker members who would otherwise have been weeded out by disease.

This, then, is the promised, or rather suggested, future,—protection for those who are wise enough to accept protection, possibly even compulsory protection from those diseases which now produce so much misery and sorrow. Let us see how the matter stands, examining the evidence by experiments made on creatures of comparatively smaller worth, and, be it noted, not made on them that man alone may gain, but directly for the protection of the lower animals from disease.

Let us take first a disease which has been proved to be produced by living germs,—by creatures capable of reproducing their kind, so that once a suitable abode is found, their numbers may increase until they kill their unwilling host.

In the twenty years ending 1853, the silk culture of France had more than doubled, and there seemed every reason to believe that it would continue to increase for many years to come. The weight of the cocoons produced in 1853 amounted to no less than 52 millions of pounds. But on a sudden the aspect of affairs changed. A disease appeared which rapidly spread, and in little more than half the time during which the silk culture had doubled, it was reduced to less than the sixth part of its amount in 1853. In 1865 the cocoons only weighed eight millions of pounds. The loss in revenue, in this single year, amounted to four million pounds sterling.

The disease which had produced these disastrous results has received the name of *Pébrine*. It shows itself in the silkworm by black spots (whence the name). When it is fairly developed the worms become distorted and stunted, their movements are languid, their appetites fail them, and they die prematurely. But the disease does not necessarily become fairly developed in the worm. On the contrary, it may be only incipient during this stage of the silkworm's life. The worm may even produce a fine cocoon. Yet the disease incipient in the worm will be developed in the moth, and the eggs produced by the diseased moth will be diseased too!

It was in 1849 that the characteristic feature of the disease was first recognised. In that year Guérin Méneville noticed small vibratory bodies in the blood of silkworms. It was shown that the vibrations were not due to independent life; and the error was made of supposing that the corpuscles belonged to the blood of the worm. In reality they are capable of indefinite multiplication. They are the real germs of the disease. These living bodies "first take possession of the intestinal canal, and spread thence throughout the body of the worm. They fill the silk cavities," says Tyndall, "the stricken insect often going automatically through the motions of spinning, without any material to work

upon. Its organs, instead of being filled with the clear viscous liquid of the silk, are packed to distension by the corpuscles."

The case of the silkworms may be regarded as closely similar to that of a nation attacked by plague or pestilence. If anything, the case of the silkworms seemed even more difficult to deal with. At any rate, no plague which has fallen on man ever gave rise to so many suggestions for the remedy of the mischief. "The pharmacopœia of the silkworm," wrote M. Cornalia, in 1860, "is now as complicated as that of man. Gases, liquids, and solids have been laid under contribution. From chlorine to sulphurous acid, from nitric acid to rum, from sugar to sulphate of quinine, all has been invoked in behalf of the unhappy insect." "Pamphlets were showered upon the public," says Tyndall; "the monotony of waste paper being broken at rare intervals by a more or less useful publication." The French Minister of Agriculture signed an agreement to pay 500,000 francs for a remedy, which, though said by its inventor to be infallible, was found on trial to be useless.

It was when matters were in this state, that Pasteur was invited by Dumas, the celebrated chemist, to investigate the disease. Pasteur had never even seen a silkworm, so that it was not because of any special experience in the habits of the creature that Dumas considered him likely to achieve success where so many had failed. Yet he attached extreme importance to Pasteur's compliance with his request. "*Je mets un prix extrême*," wrote Dumas, "*à voir votre attention fixée sur la question qui intéresse mon pauvre pays; la misère surpasse tout ce que vous pouvez imaginer*." For it was in Dumas's own district that the disease prevailed most terribly.

Pasteur first studied the worm at various stages of its life. Most of our readers are doubtless aware of the nature of these stages; and doubtless many have had practical experience, as we have, of the ways of the creature as they progress. First the eggs, neatly arranged by the mother moth on some suitable surface provided by the worm-keeper, are watched until in due course comes forth a small dark worm. This grows, and as it grows casts its skin, three or four times, becoming lighter at each such moulting. After the last moulting the worm has its characteristic white colour. It continues to grow (feeding on mulberry-leaves), until, the proper time having arrived, it climbs into whatever suitable place has been provided for it (silkwormers use small brambles, but our schoolboys use little paper cups) and there spins its cocoon. When this is completed and the silk has been wound off, the chrysalis is found inside, which becomes a moth, and the moth laying her eggs, the cycle is recommenced.

It was Pasteur who showed that the disease germs might lurk in the egg, or might first appear in the worm, and in either of these stages might escape detection. But the destructive corpuscles in the blood grow with the growing worm. In the chrysalis they are larger than in the full-grown silkworm; and, finally, in the moth (assuming the germ to

have begun either in the egg or the young worm) the corpuscles are easily detected. He therefore said that the moth and not the egg should be the starting point of methods intended for the destruction of the seeds of disease. For in the egg or the young worm the germs might escape detection; in the moth, he affirmed, they could not.

When Pasteur, in September 1865, announced these views, physicists and biologists agreed in rejecting them. He was told he knew nothing about silkworms, and that his supposed discoveries were old mistakes long since shown to be such.

He answered by the simple but impressive method of prediction. Parcels of eggs, regarded by their owners as healthy, were inspected by him, the moths which had produced them being submitted to his examination. He wrote his opinion in 1866, placing it in a sealed letter, in the hands of the Mayor of St. Hippolyte. In 1867, the cultivators communicated their results. Pasteur's letter was opened, and it was found that in twelve cases his prediction was fulfilled to the letter. He had said that many of the groups would perish totally, the rest almost totally; and this happened in all except two cases, where, instead of almost total destruction, half an average crop was obtained. The owners had hatched and tended these eggs in full belief that they were healthy: Pasteur's test applied for a few minutes in 1866 would have saved them this useless labour.

Again, two parcels of eggs were submitted to Pasteur, which, after examination of the moths which had produced them, he pronounced healthy. In their case an excellent crop was produced.

Pasteur carefully investigated the development of the disease-germs. He took healthy worms by 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50, and placed matter infected with the germs on their food. "Rubbing a small diseased worm in water, he smeared the mixture," says Tyndall, "over mulberry-leaves. Assuring himself that the leaves had been eaten, he watched the consequences from day to day. Side by side with the infected worms he reared their fellows, keeping them as much as possible out of the way of infection. On April 16, 1868, he thus infected thirty worms. Up to the 23rd they remained quite well. On the 25th they seemed well, but on that day corpuscles were found in the intestines of two of them. On the 27th, or eleven days after the infected repast, two fresh worms were examined, and not only was the intestinal canal found in each case invaded, but the silk organ itself was charged with corpuscles. On the 28th the twenty-six remaining worms were covered by the black spots of pébrine. On the 30th, the difference of size between the infected and non-infected worms was very striking, the sick worms being not more than two-thirds of the bulk of the healthy ones. On May 2, a worm which had just finished its fourth moulting was examined. Its whole body was so filled with the parasite as to excite astonishment that it could live. The disease advanced, the worms died and were examined, and on May 11 only six out of the thirty remained. They were the strongest of the lot,

but on being searched they also were found charged with corpuscles. Not one of the thirty worms had escaped; a single meal had poisoned them all. The standard lot, on the contrary, spun their fine cocoons, two only of their moths being proved to contain any trace of the parasite, which had doubtless been introduced during the rearing of the worms."

He examined the progress of infection still more carefully, counting the number of corpuscles, which, as the disease increased, rose from 0 to 10, to 100, and even to 1,000 or 1,500, in the field of view of his microscope. He also tried different modes of infection. "He proved that worms inoculate each other by the infliction of visible wounds with their claws." He showed that by the simple association of diseased with healthy worms the infection spread. He demonstrated in fine that "it was no hypothetical infected medium—no problematical pythogenic gas—that killed the worms, but a definite organism."

Thus did Pasteur teach the worm-cultivator how to extinguish the pestilence which had destroyed his egg crops. The plans for extirpating the diseased worms had failed before his researches, for the very sufficient reason that no sufficient means had been devised for distinguishing the diseased from the healthy. As Pasteur himself stated the matter,— "the most skilful cultivator, even the most expert microscopist, placed in presence of large cultivations which present the symptoms described in my experiments, will necessarily arrive at an erroneous conclusion if he confines himself to the knowledge which preceded my researches. The worms will not present to him the slightest spot of pébrine; the microscope will not reveal the existence of corpuscles; the mortality of the worms will be null or insignificant; and the cocoons leave nothing to be desired. Our observer would, therefore, conclude without hesitation that the eggs produced will be good for incubation. The truth is, on the contrary, that all the worms of these fine crops have been poisoned; that from the beginning they carried in them the germ of the malady, ready to multiply itself beyond measure in the chrysalides and the moths, thence to pass into the eggs and smite with sterility the next generation. And what is the first cause of the evil concealed under so deceitful an exterior? In our experiments we can, so to speak, touch it with our fingers. It is entirely the effect of a single corpuscularous repast; an effect more or less prompt according to the epoch of life of the worm that has eaten the poisoned food."

His plans for the elimination of diseased worms, and for the isolation of the healthy from contagion in any possible form, met with full success. The disease has not been eradicated, because the silk-producing districts cannot be completely isolated; but its ravages have been so far reduced that the cultivation of silk promises soon to reach something like the position which had been hoped for before the disease had shown itself.

Now between the ideas which had prevailed respecting pébrine before Pasteur's researches, and those which still prevail respecting many con-

tagious diseases, there is a striking analogy. Just as Pasteur was assured by many experienced silk-growers that the disease was due to some deleterious medium, rendered more or less poisonous at different times by some mysterious influence, so epidemic diseases, we are assured by many experienced medical men, are due to occult influences arising spontaneously in foul air. It matters not that as certainly as an animal produces creatures of its own kind, and not of some other kind, so the poison of one fever produces always that fever, and not some other fever. In this they find no evidence of anything akin to what Dr. Budd has called parentage. The followers of Pasteur in the silk districts, and those who have benefited by others of his researches, presently to be described, would as soon believe in the spontaneous generation of pébrine and kindred diseases, as in the spontaneous generation of cats and dogs. But many still believe respecting diseases affecting the human race in which precisely the same phenomena of reproduction are presented, that they arise from some spontaneous fermentation (unlike every form of fermentation on which experiments have yet been made).

But before we pass to consider other and even more decisive evidence, we may note that, so far as the researches of Pasteur on pébrine are concerned, we have not yet seen the way to any means of safety from the contagious diseases which affect human beings. We cannot kill all diseased persons in order that we may get rid of the disease-germs within them.

Even more remarkable than his investigation of the silkworm disease was Pasteur's investigation of the disease known as splenic fever, which affects horses, cattle, and sheep on the continent. In the rapidity of its action this disease (known also as "anthrax," and "charbon") resembles the black plague. In bad cases death ensues in the course of twenty-four hours. In less severe cases the creature attacked suffers greatly, and retains the traces of the attack during the rest of its life. It is stated that between the years 1867 and 1870 no less than 56,000 deaths occurred among horses, cattle, and sheep in the district of Novgorod, in Russia, while 568 human beings perished, to whom the disease had been somehow communicated. In France the disease is very prevalent, and many proprietors have been ruined by the entire destruction of their flocks and herds. It is said that a malady which occurs among the woolsorters at Bradford (often proving fatal) is a modification of anthrax communicated by the wool of sheep which have suffered from splenic fever.

In 1850 MM. Rayer and Devaine discovered minute transparent rodlike bodies in the blood of animals which had suffered from this disease. Koch, a German physician, then scarcely known, showed that these objects are of a fungoid nature, and traced the various stages of their existence. Cohn obtained similar results, as did Ewart in England. The growth of the disease-producing rods, as studied under microscopic examination, is as follows:—First, germs of extreme minuteness are seen

in the form of simple tubes with transverse divisions; next, minute dots appear, which enlarge into egg-shaped bodies lying in rows within the tubes; lastly, the rods break up, freeing the ovoid germs. It has been shown that "the minutest drop of the fluid containing these germs, if conveyed into another portion of cultivated fluid, initiates the same process of growth and reproduction; and this may be repeated many times without any impairment of the potency of the germs, which, when introduced by inoculation into the bodies of rabbits, guinea-pigs, and mice, develop in them all the characteristic phenomena of splenic fever. Koch further ascertained," continues Dr. Carpenter, from whom the above passage is quoted, "that the blood of animals that succumbed to this disease might be dried and kept for four years, and might even be pulverized into dust, without losing its power of infection."

Pasteur's first steps in inquiring into this disease were characterised by the same keenness of judgment which he displayed in investigating *pébrine*. He ascertained that "charbon" would often appear in its most malignant form among sheep feeding in seemingly healthy pastures, where there were no known causes of infection. He found on inquiry that animals which years before had died in those regions, had been buried ten or twelve feet below the surface, so that it seemed obvious they could have had nothing to do with the reappearance of the malady. But in inquiries such as these, Pasteur has taught us that what obviously *cannot be* has an unfortunately perplexing fashion of turning out to be precisely what *is*. He quickly became persuaded that in some way the germs of disease supposed to be buried out of the way three or four yards beneath the soil reached the surface and originated fresh attacks of the "charbon" pestilence. He found in earth-worms—those creatures which Darwin has recently shown to be such important workers in the earth's crust—the cause of the trouble. He was ridiculed, of course. But he has a troublesome way of turning ridicule upon those who laugh at him. Collecting worms from pastures where the disease had reappeared, "he made an extract of the contents of their alimentary canals, and found that the inoculation of rabbits and guinea-pigs with this extract gave them the severest form of 'charbon,' due to the multiplication in their circulating current of the deadly anthrax-bacillus" (this is the pleasing way science has of describing the disease germs), "with which their blood was found after death to be loaded."

Our countryman, Professor Brown Sanderson, discovered another way in which "anthrax" has been communicated. He found that herds affected with it had been fed with brewers' grains supplied from a common source, "and on examining microscopically a sample of these grains, they were seen to be swarming with the deadly bacillus, which, when once it has found its way among them, grows and multiplies with extraordinary rapidity."

But now comes the point which renders this inquiry important to ourselves. The poison germs are small, visible only in the microscope,

but they are fungoid, and the laws of their growth and development are as determinable (with suitable care) as the laws of the growth and development of the monarchs of a forest. Now whatever lives and grows and produces creatures after its own kind, whether animal or vegetable, can be cultivated. With due care and watchfulness it may be altered in type and character, just as the wild plants of the hedgerow may be altered into plants producing the flowers and fruits of our gardens and hothouses. The methods of cultivation are not precisely the same, because as yet microscopists do not know how to select the less from the more destructive germs, so as to propagate from the former only. But, as Dr. Carpenter puts the matter, two modes of "culture" suggest themselves: first, "the introduction of the germs into the circulating current of animals of a different type, and its repeated transfusion from one animal into another;" and secondly, "cultivation carried on out of the living body, in fluids (such as blood-serum or meat juice) which are found favourable to its growth, the temperature of the fluid, in the latter case, being kept up nearly to blood-heat. Both these methods have been used by Pasteur himself and by Professor Burdon Sanderson; and the latter especially by M. Toussaint of Toulouse, who, as well as Pasteur, has experimented also on another bacillus which he had found to be the disease-germ of a malady termed 'fowl cholera,' which proves fatal among poultry in France and Switzerland. It has been by Pasteur that the conditions of the mitigation of the poison by culture have been most completely determined; so that the disease produced by the inoculation of his 'cultivated' virus may be rendered so trivial as to be scarcely worth notice. His method consists in cultivating the bacillus in meat-juice or chicken-broth, to which access of air is permitted while dust is excluded; and then allowing a certain time to elapse before it is made use of in inoculation experiments. If the period does not exceed two months the potency of the bacillus is little diminished; but if the interval be extended to three or four months, it is found that though animals inoculated with the organism take the disease, they have it in a milder form, and a considerable proportion recover; whilst if the time be still further prolonged, say to eight months, the disease produced by it is so mild as not to be at all serious, the inoculated animals speedily regaining perfect health and vigour."

Now, if we consider what has been done in this case we shall recognise the probability, if not the absolute promise, of protection being obtained against some of the most terrible of the diseases which affect the human race. We see that in some cases, at any rate, the germs of a deadly disease may be so "cultivated" that the disease, though communicable by the altered germs, is no longer fatal. Now we know that the milder attacks of scarlet fever, measles, whooping-cough, diphtheria, and other such diseases, produce as completely protective a change in the constitution of the patient as the severest forms short of absolutely fatal attacks. We see, then, that even had no experiments been made

to determine whether the disease communicated by cultivated germs is protective, there would be good reason to believe that it is so.

But such experiments have been made. What Pasteur calls the "vaccination" for the "anthrax" disease has been shown by repeated experiments to be absolutely protective. Prof. Greenfield has vaccinated cattle from rodents (gnawing animals like rats, squirrels, &c.) with the "anthrax disease," and has found that they remain free from all disorder, local or constitutional. The same result has attended M. Toussaint's experiments with the bacillus "cultivated" in special fluids, not in the living body of any creature: sheep and dogs inoculated with this cultivated poison showing no form of the deadly "anthrax" disease.

The experiment was conducted on a large scale under the auspices of the provincial agricultural societies of France. A flock of fifty sheep was placed at M. Pasteur's disposal. Of these he vaccinated twenty-five with the cultivated "anthrax" poison on May 3, 1881, repeating the operation a fortnight later. All the animals thus treated passed through a slight illness, but at the end of the month were as well as their fellows, the twenty-five which had not been vaccinated. On May 31, all the fifty were inoculated with the strongest anthrax poison "M. Pasteur predicted that on the following day the twenty-five which were inoculated for the first time would all be dead, whilst those protected by previous 'vaccination' with the mild virus would be perfectly free from even mild indisposition. A large assemblage of agricultural authorities, cavalry officers, and veterinary surgeons met on the field the next afternoon to learn the result. At two o'clock twenty-three of the unprotected sheep were dead; the twenty-fourth died an hour later, and the twenty-fifth at four. But the twenty-five 'vaccinated' sheep were all in perfectly good condition; one of them, which had been designedly inoculated with an extra dose of the poison, having been slightly indisposed for a few hours, but having then recovered."

These experiments are important in themselves. The French owners of flocks and herds have now an infallible protection against the deadly "charbon" poison, which had caused serious loss to nearly all of them, and ruinous loss to not a few. But such experiments are infinitely more important in what they promise. If the law which they seem to indicate is general, if every kind of disease-germ can be "cultivated" so as to be deprived of its malignancy, but not of its protective agency, then we may hope to see cholera, diphtheria, measles, scarlatina, and other diseases brought as thoroughly under control as one which formerly was the most deadly of them all—small-pox.

Let us here pause for a moment to consider some inquiries which have been made by two American doctors, H. C. Wood and Formad, under the direction of the American National Board of Health, into the nature of the poison which is active in diphtheritic epidemics. Read in the light of what Pasteur, Toussaint, and Greenfield have done with diseases affecting the lower animals, the inquiries of Drs. Wood and

Formad are full of promise that before long complete protection will be found against the fatal disease, diphtheria.

They had shown long ago that shreds of diphtheritic membrane, taken from the throats of human patients and used for the inoculation of rabbits, produced tubercular disease, and also that the false membrane supposed to be characteristic of diphtheria appears as a result of severe inflammation of the trachea, however produced. But now they have found that in every case of true diphtheria the membranes are loaded with minute organisms, micrococci, while the blood and the internal organs of patients dying from the disease are similarly infected. They have ascertained also how these micrococci destroy life. They attack the white corpuscles, or leucocytes in the blood. These lose their form, and eventually burst, giving exit to an irregular transparent mass packed with micrococci. Hence a new and multiplied crop of blood foes, and, with the increased destruction of the white corpuscles of the blood, the destruction of the person in whose veins the contaminated blood flows. They showed also that the disease can readily be communicated artificially from animal to animal. Another fact detected by Drs. Wood and Formad is of extreme importance, as showing how epidemics of diphtheria may be brought about as a development of the malignancy of sore throats not hitherto regarded as akin to diphtheria. They showed that in ordinary sore throat as well as in the diphtheritic sore throat the micrococci are present, differing only in development and activity. In other words, diphtheria may be regarded as due to naturally cultivated micrococci, the cultivation being of such a kind as to increase their destructiveness.

Some experiments by Pasteur illustrate the kind of cultivation just mentioned. "It is not a little curious," writes Dr. Carpenter, "that, as culture of one kind can mitigate the action of the poison germs, so culture of another kind may restore or even increase their original potency. It has been found by Pasteur"—in the case of the "anthrax" or "charbon" poison—"that this may be effected by inoculating with the mitigated virus a new-born guinea-pig, to which it will prove fatal; then using its blood for the inoculation of a somewhat older animal; and repeating this process several times. In this way a most powerful virus may be obtained at will." "This discovery," proceeds Dr. Carpenter, "is not only practically available for experimental purposes, but of great scientific interest, as throwing light upon the way in which mild types of other diseases may be converted into malignant." Dr. Grawitz has, indeed, recently asserted that even some of the most innocent of our domestic forms of disease-germs may be changed by artificial culture into disease-germs of the most destructive nature.

Of the importance of such researches as those made by Wood and Formad, some conception may be formed when we note that the deaths from diphtheria in England and Wales during the last ten years have amounted to nearly 30,000, or to more than half as many again as have been caused by small-pox.

We have seen that in diseases known to be due to living germs, the circumstances under which propagation of the disease takes place are precisely those which medical science recognises in the propagation of small-pox, measles, scarlet fever, and other so-called zymotic diseases. We have seen further that a modified form of "anthrax" (as of "fowl-cholera") can be produced which, while by no means destructive of life, exerts a perfectly protective influence. We should be justified in inferring that the protective influence of vaccination is similar in character, were it not that in such matters science requires proof, not surmise, or even highly probable inference. For, as we have seen, one disease can no more be produced by the germs of another disease than cats from dogs (to use an apt illustration of Miss Nightingale's); nor can one disease, so far as any experiments yet made seem to show, exert a protective influence against another entirely distinct. If this last rule were absolutely certain, instead of being but exceedingly probable, we might at once argue that the germs which produce vaccinia (the disturbance following vaccination) are simply the germs of small-pox "cultivated" by residing for a while in the blood of the heifer. For vaccination exerts a protective influence against small-pox, and, if such influence can only be exerted by the small-pox disease germs, it follows that the disease-germs in the case of vaccination are the same in kind as those to which small-pox is due, differing only in the energy with which they attack the springs of life.

But science is not content to take such matters for granted. The relationship between small-pox and vaccination has been definitely put to the test. Unfortunately the results hitherto obtained have not been in satisfactory agreement. Dr. Thiele of Kasan, forty years ago, repeatedly succeeded (according to a report issued under Government authority) in producing genuine vaccination by inoculating heifers with small-pox poison; and having done this he used this artificial vaccine matter in vaccinating human beings, "its protective power being found fully equal to that of the natural vaccinia." But not only so—at that comparatively remote date, Dr. Thiele unconsciously cultivated the small-pox poison germs after the second manner described above. According to his own account, and his own erroneous idea as to the meaning of what resulted, he diluted the small-pox poison with warm milk, or, as Pasteur would say, he cultivated the living germs in warm milk; and, with the poison thus modified, he produced vaccinia, without passing the small-pox poison through the blood of the cow at all. Now this was thought so unlikely to be true, in those days, that Dr. Thiele's other statements were by many physicians discredited, and this particular result was simply ignored by subsequent workers. But now, at any rate, the very improbability of what he achieved, according to the views prevalent in his day, should cause us to regard with all the more confidence his account of his experiments. For no man, still less a skilful physician as Dr. Thiele undoubtedly was, would invent experiments with improbable results. If he invented at all he would at any rate invent what

seemed likely to be true, especially if the experiments were such as could be very readily repeated. In our own time this particular experiment might be invented by a dishonest person, the result being altogether likely to be right: others might be left to make the experiments and the credit claimed by him who asserted that he had made them himself. But in Thiele's time it was very unlikely that this would be done. It seems, therefore, exceedingly probable, so far as his account is concerned, that in the first place a modified form of the true small-pox poison is communicated in vaccination, and in the second, that a suitably modified form can be obtained without the use of the cow at all, by simply cultivating the small-pox disease-germs in warm milk.

But simultaneously with Dr. Thiele's researches others were made in this country by Mr. Ceely, of Aylesbury, which led to results not exactly contrary to those by Dr. Thiele, but which were certainly less satisfactory. He was able to produce an eruption in cows inoculated with small-pox virus, and the disease was transmissible to the human subject; but it resembled small-pox rather than vaccinia, and its transmission by inoculation did not produce what the best judges considered as genuine cowpock. It was allowed to die out.

We may suggest in passing, as a possible cause of the difference thus observed between Ceely's and Thiele's results, some difference in the length of time allowed to elapse after the small-pox virus was transmitted to the cow. It may be necessary, in making such experiments, to recall Pasteur's experiments with "fowl-cholera," when it was found that the potency of the bacillus was only sufficiently reduced after the lapse of a considerable time.

On the contrary the experiments made a few years later than Ceely's by Mr. Badcock, of Brighton, were similar in their results to those made by Dr. Thiele. Dr. Carpenter, who has been able to examine the record kept by Mr. Badcock's son, states that Mr. Badcock "inoculated his cows with small-pox virus furnished to him from an unquestionable source, and that this inoculation produced vesicles which were pronounced by some of the best practitioners of Brighton to have the characters of genuine vaccinia, while the lymph drawn from these vesicles, and introduced by inoculation into the arms of children, produced in them vaccine vesicles of the true Jennerian type. "Free exposure of some of these children to small-pox infection," adds Dr. Carpenter, "showed them to have acquired a complete protection, and the new stock of vaccine has been extensively diffused through the country, and has been fully approved by the best judges of true vaccinia both in London and the provinces. Mr. Simon, writing in 1857, stated that from the new stock thus obtained by Mr. Badcock (not only once but repeatedly), more than 14,000 persons had been vaccinated by Mr. Badcock himself, and that he had furnished supplies of his lymph to more than 4,000 medical practitioners. And I learn from Mr. Badcock, jun., who is now a public vaccinator at Brighton, that this stock is still in use in that town and neighbourhood."

These results seem decisive. But against them we must set the failures of attempts made by Professors Chauveau and Burdon Sanderson, by Belgian physicians who have recently conducted experiments in this direction, and the earlier experiments of Ceely. But as Dr. Carpenter well remarks, failures cannot be regarded as negating the absolute and complete successes obtained by Thiele and Badcock. We can perhaps learn from a careful study of the failures the conditions on which success and failure may depend. But a single success is absolutely decisive; because, as we have seen, persons inoculated with the poison germs obtained from the cows experimented on by Thiele and Badcock were found to be fully protected against the deadly small-pox poison—a result which there can be no mistaking.

It is gratifying to know that neither Chauveau nor Burdon Sanderson consider their failure as negating decisively the results obtained by Thiele and Badcock. A reinvestigation of the matter is to be carried on before long, and as Mr. Badcock, sen., himself is able and willing to give all necessary information as to the way in which his researches were carried on, there is every prospect that the secret of success in such researches will be discovered. We venture to predict with considerable confidence that the new researches will unmistakably confirm those of Badcock and Thiele.

In the meantime let us note some experiments which are full of promise in another direction.

Anti-vaccinationists, not concerned by the terrible mischief which has followed the attempts of their followers to escape vaccination, continue their outcry against what they call legalised poisoning, and often with success, especially in America, where there is no settled system of compulsory vaccination. But, when there are outbreaks of malignant small-pox, those who have seemed to agree with the anti-vaccinationists are found singularly ready to seek the protection which vaccination affords; and in America they are not only willing to be vaccinated themselves in such cases, but eager to pass municipal enactments for compulsory vaccination. It seems, however, that even independently of the vaccination of the healthy, there is a resource by which safety can be secured in cases of epidemic small-pox, and the disease quickly stamped out. The importance of this will be recognised when we consider the probability that protective means will before long be found in the case of other diseases, and the extreme unlikelihood that (for many years to come) all adults would consent, except perhaps in times of epidemics, to be inoculated with the specific poisons of other diseases than small-pox.

Dr. Payne, late Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine in the Southern Medical College, Atlanta, noticed, as far back as 1846, when at the Small-pox Hospital in New York, that the initial fever of small-pox can be detected by the pulse for some time before any other symptom appears. The pulse is peculiar, and difficult to describe; “but recognisable by any physician who will patiently and carefully investigate

the subject until his finger becomes educated." "When once recognised," says Professor Payne, "it can *never* be forgotten, any more than the peculiar thrill imparted to the finger by the pulse of a patient who has lost large quantities of blood by hæmorrhage can be forgotten by a physician who has once learned to detect it."

Now Dr. Payne, whenever he recognises the initial fever in this way, at once vaccinates the patient. If this is done within ten or twelve hours after the initial fever of small-pox has set in, the patient will have but a slight illness, will show no trace of eruption, and will be thenceforth as perfectly safe from a recurrence of the disease as if he had had small-pox in its most malignant form. A still more remarkable feature of the case is this, that if the patient is vaccinated after the initial fever sets in, he can go about where he pleases without any fear of imparting the disease to others. The ingrafting of the vaccine matter upon the primary small-pox fever seems to destroy its ability of reproduction or propagation entirely. (Here, of course, it is to be noted, that its power of reproduction by actual revaccination remains, but that its power of reproduction in the ordinary way in which small-pox spreads is destroyed, just as in vaccination.) "Another peculiarity," says Dr. Payne, "is this; if an unprotected patient is vaccinated before the beginning of the fever, and the vaccine takes, but does not prevent, only modifies the disease, the eruption will be like that of variola in its appearance and characteristics. But if vaccinated after the commencement of the initial fever, and too late to entirely prevent an eruption, the eruption will resemble in size and character the small-pox eruption. There is," he adds, "as great a difference in the appearance of the varioloid and small-pox eruption as there is between grey and yellow."

Dr. Payne relates a very interesting case illustrating his method of dealing with cases of small-pox, first where the patient had not been vaccinated in good time, and later with those who showed signs of the initial fever. In 1873 an epidemic of small-pox broke out in Virginia, the small-pox being of the variety known as *variola nigra*, and when not modified by some benign influence was invariably confluent. Both in and around Manassas the cases were of the same kind. Being called on to attend a coloured servant-girl, who was ill in a room over the kitchen of a large hotel near his own dwelling, he recognised in her the pulse peculiar to small-pox, and next day the eruption appeared. "I saw," he says, "it would never do to remove this woman, and I determined to isolate the case, and abide the consequences, be they what they might. If I have her removed the poor woman will die, and the prevailing winds will blow the poison for miles down the valley below, and the disease will spread beyond control. But should she die (of which there is strong probability) my plans will be defeated. Firm in faith of the greatest good to the greatest number, I said to myself, 'If she dies, I will wrap her from her toes to the crown of her head in double linen, and with the aid of some one who has had the small-pox, I will bury

her.'" Luckily she recovered. "Three persons who were in the room at the time were ordered to report to the Doctor twice daily. One showed the peculiar pulse on the 24th; he was then vaccinated, and after being indisposed for two days (but without eruption) recovered. The others, who had been vaccinated before, did not take it.

In one case, a family of eight persons, "poor and shiftless coloured people," occupied a house in which there was only one room, and where good air and cleanliness were impossible. The father suffered from a very malignant attack of varioloid and was terribly scarred, but the rest of the family, none of whom had ever been vaccinated before, were vaccinated after the initial fever began, and escaped with slight attacks. In another case, where a whole family were exposed to the infection, he vaccinated the father and two sisters, but an old aunt who had not been vaccinated for many years, refused to be vaccinated, being attacked by varioloid. The day after vaccinating the father and sisters, a brother who had returned showed the peculiar pulse. Dr. Payne vaccinated him at once, and the next day his arm looked as if he had been vaccinated eight days before; it rapidly became sore; he was indisposed for two or three days, and recovered without a single sign of eruption. These cases are taken from a report of Dr. Payne's experiments in the *Scientific American*. Dr. Payne's plan has been tried in more than a hundred cases, extending over a period of thirty-four years, without a single failure.

Supposing that what has been shown to be true of small-pox is true also of other malignant diseases, a haven of safety is in view, though it may be that some time must elapse before it can be reached. The germ peculiar to each disease has to be made the subject of special study. The proper habitat for such "cultivation" as shall result in mitigating the virulence of its action has to be determined, and the degree of protective power remaining after cultivation has to be ascertained. Next the indications of the initial stage of each form of disease have to be recognised,* and the effects of inoculation with the mitigated disease determined. When this has been done (always on the assumption we have made that what seems most probably true is really so), "plague and pestilence" will no longer be feared as they now are. Isolation of those first attacked from the rest will go a great way to diminish the risk of the infection spreading. A careful watch for the signs of the initial fever among those exposed to infection will do the rest, if due measures are taken in every case when the initial fever shows itself.

And as the inquiries of Pasteur and his fellow-workers seem thus to indicate a haven of safety, so also do they show the presence of concealed rocks, of dangers heretofore unnoticed. What Pasteur showed respect-

* It may well be that in many cases, instead of the comparatively rough test of feeling the pulse, the use of the sphygmograph, or some other instrument for determining minute changes in the character of the pulse, may be required.

ing the deadly "anthrax" has its analogue, we may be sure, in diseases affecting the human race. Dangers lurk where none would suspect them, and where only the keen eyes of the trained science-worker can find them. The poison-germ may attack through the alimentary canal in the food we eat, through the lungs in the air we breathe, as well as directly through the blood-current. Disease and death may lurk in a dress, a child's toy, a lock of hair, a letter, or a carpet. Neither time nor distance avails to destroy the fatal infection.

We may note lastly a point to which attention has been directed by Dr. Andrew Wilson, in *Knowledge*, that the practical and actual benefits which have flowed to human health, and which are likely to flow in the future as well—"the saving of life by the prevention and extermination of disease"—have arisen from a simple study in natural history. So-called practical minds are often given to loudly express their disapproval of any science which deals with what to them seem mere abstractions. Doubtless to such minds the study of the development of the "rods" of splenic fever under a watch-glass must seem a piece of scientific *dilettantism*, just as information respecting the solar system may seem despicable enough, because its results cannot be measured by a profitable currency, or, in plain language, because it does not seem to pay. The best answer to such reasoning is found in the recital of the results to human and animal life, to which studies in an apparently unimportant field of research in natural history have led and seem likely to lead mankind.

R. A. P.

Jar-Connaught: a Sketch.

THE most salient features of a region are not always its most characteristic ones, those which a longer and a better acquaintanceship stamps upon our memories as final. Roughly speaking, all acquaintanceship with scenery may be said to come under one or other of two heads: to be either extrinsic or intrinsic—the point of view, namely, of the man that looks at it from the inside, or of the man that looks at it from the outside; in other words, that of the tourist and that of the native. With the former everything, or nearly everything, depends upon first impressions. Should things go ill then for him, that scenery is destined ever after to remain blotted with the mists that enshrouded it during his visit, or, worse still, environed with the discomforts endured at that diabolical inn, whose evil memory stands out as the most prominent fact of his travels. He is also (unless possessed of unusual strength of mind) much at the mercy of his guide-book; still more perhaps—at all events in Ireland—at that of his local Jehu. Pursued with the terror of not seeing everything, he as a consequence sees little, and that little unsatisfactorily. The native, on the other hand, is troubled with none of these things. He keeps to his own ground, and he knows it well; its roads, lanes, fields, ditches, dykes—probably its sheep, cows, and pigs. Here, however, as a rule, he stops. Beyond his own parish, or his own boundary, he knows and professes to know nothing. Why should he? He is not a tourist nor yet a land surveyor; why should he trouble himself, therefore, to go poking about over mountains and moors, especially out of the shooting season? Now and then, however, one happens to come across a being who does not fall strictly speaking into either one or other of these categories; who is not tied by the ties and shackled by the shackles of the resident, and who, on the other hand, does not believe in the possibility of exploring an entire tract of country, and plucking out the whole heart of its mystery within a space of twenty-four hours; who has a prejudice, too, in favour of forming his own views unbiassed by the views of his predecessors. Now if in this particular region named in my heading I were happy enough to find myself in the company of such a discriminating traveller as this, what course should I suggest his pursuing in order as quickly as may be to come at the main facts and features of its topography? All things considered, I should suggest his first and foremost clambering up to the top of one of the neighbouring mountains—there are no lack, fortunately, to choose from—and there, having first seated himself as comfortably as may be upon an obliging boulder, to proceed leisurely to

spell at the main features of the scene below, so as to secure some general notion of its character previous to studying it in greater detail. Before doing this it may be as well for me to state, however, a little more definitely what and where this same region of Iar-Connaught is, since, beyond a general impression that it is somewhere or other in Ireland, it is by no means impossible that some of my readers may be completely at sea as to its whereabouts. Iar, or West Connaught, then, is, or rather was, the original name for the whole of the region now known to the tourist as Connemara, with the addition of a further strip of country stretching eastward as far as the town of Galway. This latter and more familiar name would seem to have crept gradually into use, and its limits consequently to have never been very accurately defined. In the generality of maps and guide-books it will be found to begin at a line drawn from somewhere about the south-east side of Kilkieran Bay to the upper end of Lough Corrib—a wholly imaginary line where no boundary whatsoever exists; west of this line being called Connemara, while the name of Iar or West-Connaught is usually, though obviously improperly, assigned to the remaining or south-eastern portion. Any one who will glance at the map of Ireland will see the natural boundaries of the region at a glance. A great lake—the second or third largest in the kingdom—extends nearly due north and south, cutting the county of Galway into an eastward and a westward portion. This lake is only separated from the sea by a narrow neck of land barely four miles wide, which neck of land is again divided into east and west by the salmon river—dear to all fishermen—which falls into the sea just below the town. Between this and the Atlantic the whole region to the westward is more or less mountainous ground, some of the highest summits in Ireland falling within its area; while, on the other side, no sooner do we leave the coast than we get upon that broad limestone plain which occupies the whole centre of Ireland. Taking all this into consideration, it will, I think, be admitted that the original boundaries are as good as need be, and that whether we call the region Iar-Connaught or Connemara, it is better to abide by them than by the newer and more obviously arbitrary ones. North, again, the boundary of our region coincides pretty closely with those of the counties Mayo and Galway; and here, too, what we may call the natural frontier is very sharply and clearly defined; the Killary Bay stretching its long arm some ten miles or so inland, while from the other side a long loop or “coose” at the southern extremity of Lough Mask stretches seaward in friendly fashion to meet it; the intermediate space being occupied by the Lake Nafuoey, and the various streams, small and big, which flow in and out of it. North of this, again, we have two more mountain ranges: the Fornamore, which, with Slieve Partry and the hill called the Devil’s Mother, forms a single continuous train of summits; while to the west, on the further side of the Killary Bay, rise the great mountain-mass of Mweelrea and its two brother peaks; the whole constituting a sort of

fraternity or community of mountains, separated by the sea or intervening plains from every other.

And now to return to our much-enduring traveller, who has been left "poised in mid-air upon the giddy top" of one of the Bennabeolas (commonly known as the Twelve Pins), and whose patience will probably be at an end before he has begun even to acquire his lesson.

The first thing certain, I think, to strike anyone who attains to at all an extended view over Iar-Connaught is the extraordinary extent to which land and water have here invaded, or rather, so to speak, interpenetrated, one another. To a more or less extent this of course is characteristic of all rugged coasts, but here it would really seem as if the process must have attained its maximum. Looking out from our eyrie over the surrounding country, the general effect is as though the sky had been dropping lakes upon the land, and the land in return had been showering rocks upon the sea. Westward, where the two great headlands of Angrus and Slyne Head jut into the sea, we see, between their outstretched points, and to right and left of them, and far out over the sea in every direction, an infinite multitude of island points, dark above, gleaming and glittering below, where the sun catches upon their wave-washed sides. Some of these islands are gathered together into clusters; others are single or in scattered groups. Round islands, long islands, oblong islands; islands of every shape and size, from the tiny illauns and carrigeens, which barely afford a foothold to the passing gull, up to the respectable-sized islands of Inishbofin and Inishturk, which boast their populations of five and six hundred inhabitants apiece, and carry on, or did until lately carry on, a considerable traffic in kelp, receiving in return poteen and such other necessities of life as are not as yet grown upon the islands. Now if, turning our eyes away from the sea, we look inland, we shall see that the same sort of general effect presents itself, only that here the elements are reversed. Here the sea has everywhere invaded and taken possession of the land. Try to follow one of its glittering arms to its end, and when you think you have seen the last of it, lo! it reappears on the other side of some small summit, winding away in intricate curves and convolutions far as the eye can see. As for the lakes, they are endless, bewildering, past all power of man to count or to remember. With all the Celt's talent for bestowing appropriate names upon the objects with which he finds himself surrounded, here nature has been too many for him, a large proportion of these lakes having, so far as I am aware, received no names at all. Indeed, even to know them apart is quite sufficiently perplexing. Lough Inagh and Derryclare, perhaps, with their wooded islands; Ballinahach, with its castle and its salmon streams; Kylemore Lake in its wooded glen, and Lough Muck and Lough Fee, filling up the deep gorge which stretches seaward between two steep cliffs; these, and perhaps some dozen or so more, we may distinguish readily enough; but who will undertake to give an account of the countless multitude of loughs and

loughs, drift-basins, bog-basins, and rock-basins, which stud the whole face of the country between Lough Corrib and the sea? Look at the low ground south of Clifden and between us and Slyne Head! You might compare it with a looking-glass starred with cracks, or to a net, of which the strands stood for the ground, and the intermediate spaces for the water! Many, too, of these lakes lie far away out of every one's reach, and are never seen at all, or only once a year, perhaps, by some turf-cutter, on his way to a distant bog, or some sportsman taking a fresh cast in hopes of coming upon that pack of grouse someone is reported to have seen in this direction. Others, again, lie high up upon the mountain sides, often close to the very summit, where they are still less likely to be seen, though any one who will take the trouble of clambering up in search of them will find that few things are more beautiful in their way than these little desolate tarns, set about with huge rocks, yet so clear that every modulation of the skies may be seen reflected on their surface. Most striking of these, perhaps, are the so-called "corries"—bowl-shaped hollows, usually flat-bottomed, and cut out of the solid rock. Often a whole series of these may be seen lying parallel to one another upon the vertical sides of precipices; the effect from below being very much as if so many mouthfuls had been bitten out of the cliff. Some of these corries contain water; others again are dry. When full they are usually partly formed of drift, which, accumulating at the mouth of the hollow, hinders the water from escaping. As to their origin, geologists differ not a little, some maintaining that they are due to direct ice action, and chiefly for the following reasons: first, that they differ entirely from hollows made by any other agencies; secondly, that nothing in the least resembling them is now being formed by the sea; and, thirdly, that they cannot possibly be due to the ordinary meteoric agents—rain, snow, wind, running water, &c.—since these very agents are at present busily engaged in smoothing them away. Others, equally entitled to our confidence, maintain, first, that other agents besides ice are perfectly capable of making similar hollows; secondly, that the sea is at this very moment engaged in scooping out small coves and cooses, which, if raised in a general elevation of the land, would in time present an appearance very similar to these hill corries, such as we now see them; and thirdly, that the original cause, or at any rate the chief agent, must have been, not ice, but faults and dislocations in the rock, aided subsequently by glacial or marine action. Where experts differ to such an extent, how, it may be asked, is the humble inquirer to steer his modest course?

But we are not dependent upon rock corries for our evidence of ice action in this neighbourhood; we meet it in ten thousand different forms. In fact there is probably no district in Great Britain where its sign-manual has been written in plainer or more legible characters. In this respect our Bennabeola range is of special interest, as from it, rather

than from either of the neighbouring and rival ranges, is held to have spread that great ice-sheet whose effects are so plainly visible upon every scratched stone and crag-rounded hill-side within an area of sixty miles. Why it *should* have spread here is, however, at first by no means obvious. On the contrary, it would at first sight seem more likely that from the higher and on the whole bulkier mass of Mweelrea and its brother peaks would have come that impetus which has thus stamped itself upon all the country round. But no—they have been swept across by ice coming from this direction. This has been very well and clearly shown in an admirable little memoir on the subject published some years since by Messrs. Close and Kinahan.* “The ice stream,” say these authors, “has passed on and moved, not only against Croagh Patrick, but farther northward against the range of the Erris and Tyrawley mountains. Although partly forced out of its way by them, it has nevertheless streamed across them—certainly through their passes, e.g. that of Coolnabinnia on the west side of Nephin (as shown by the striations on the summit of Tristia, nearly 1,100 feet above the sea), that of Lough Feeagh (witness the striations on the side of Buckoogh at 1,200 feet), and that of Ballacragher Bay near Molranny (as evidenced by the striations in Corraun Achill on the north-west side of Clew Bay); in all these cases the movement of the red sandstone blocks corroborates the evidence of the striations.”

As to the further question of why this and not the Mweelrea range should have been selected for the honour of being the local “birthplace of glaciers,” that is believed to be due, partly to the fact that, though less high, these Bennabeolas form on the whole a more compact mass than the Mayo group; but still more to the circumstance of the latter having been robbed of their full share of snow by the former, which, stretching further to the south-west, then as now were the first to intercept the moisture-laden winds of the Atlantic. Instead, however, of curdling into cloud and discharging themselves in sheets of rain as they do at present, their burden was then flung down in the form of snow, which, hardening and consolidating into ice, rapidly accumulated in the valleys, heaped itself up over every hillside, in many instances burying the very summits themselves under what was practically a huge superimposed mountain of solid ice.

Though often spoken of as a glacier, this, it must always be remembered, is not what in Switzerland and elsewhere is understood by a glacier at all. In picturing to ourselves the state of things which must once have existed in these islands, we are too apt to draw all our ideas and illustrations from these Swiss Alps—the only perpetually snow-clad region with which most of us have any practical acquaintance. Now nothing can be more misleading. In Switzerland the glaciers only exist down to a certain well-defined line, where, being met by the

* *Glaciation of Iar-Connaught and its Neighbourhood.* G. H. Kinahan, M.R.I.A., and Rev. Maxwell H. Close.

warm air of the valleys, they pass away in the milky torrents, familiar to any one who has stood, for instance, beside the Rhone, and seen it pour its white volumes into the Lake of Geneva, where, leaving behind it all the heavier and more insoluble part of its burden, it issues gaily upon the further side, the bluest of blue rivers leaping to the sea. Here, however, a very different order of things from this existed. The ice which has scraped and planed these hill-sides was not in fact a glacier at all. No puny glacier, such as hills of this height could alone have given birth to, would ever have reached a tithe of the distance covered by this mighty stream, one arm of which alone has been traced the whole way up the valley of Lough Mask, and out at Killala Bay, a distance of over sixty miles; while how much further it went no human being of course can tell, all further traces of it being henceforth hidden by the sea. To find a region where ice is now *really* moulding and fashioning the landscape, as it once moulded and fashioned these Galway valleys and hillsides, we must go, not to Switzerland or to any temperate region at all, but to a very much less comfortable part of the world—to Greenland and the icy shores of Baffin's Bay. There, in the grim and gruesome regions of the "central silence," few, if any, of the phenomena familiar to us in Switzerland are to be seen; no tall peaks rising out of green laughing valleys; no glaciers with their wrinkled ice falls, their blue crevices, and their brown moraines; everything, save a few here and there of the highest summits, being hidden away under a huge all-encompassing death-shroud of snow and ice, from which all life, and nearly all movement, have vanished. So, too, it must once have been with our Twelve Pins, and with all the region round about. They too have known what it is to be smothered up in ice and snow; ice which in this instance must have risen high above their heads, as its handiwork can be seen written upon the crags at the summit; though how many feet or hundreds of feet higher, it would doubtless puzzle even the best and most experienced of geologists to decide.

Meanwhile we must not expend the whole of the time at our disposal upon one mountain summit, but must hasten away to other though not perhaps necessarily more attractive scenes.

I just now said that Iar-Connaught was a land of lakes; but, if so, it is even more emphatically a land of streams. Go where we will our ears are filled with the noise of running water. Streams drop upon us from the rocks, dash across the road under our feet, and appear unexpectedly in all directions. Many, too, of the lakes are united to one another by streams—strung together, as it were, upon a thin silvery thread of water. Not many, certainly, of these streams attain to any very great volume, but what they lack in size they more than make up for by their multitude. Larger ones, such as the Erriff and Joyce's River, are fed by an infinite number of small rivulets, which come racing down the hillsides from a thousand invisible sources, and after prolonged rains the hills appear literally streaked with white, so closely do the torrents lie

together. Where smaller streams find their own way to the sea, their course is often impeded and almost obstructed by the mass of stones and detritus which they have themselves brought down from the hills. Walking up one of these stream-sides, one is often fairly astounded at the size and the number of these blocks. Boulders, varying from the size of a hencoop to that of a comfortable-sized cottage, strew the bed of the stream, witnesses of a thousand forgotten storms. In the wider portions these get often piled up into small rocky islands, where sods of peat lodge, and where the young birch and mountain ash spring up safe from the tooth of marauding sheep or goats. It is in the narrower portions, however, where the stream has had to saw a channel for itself through the hard face of the rock that the boulders become jammed and accumulate to such an extraordinary degree, often filling the narrow channel to the very brim, and obliging the water to escape, as best it can, in a series of small gushes and separate torrents, which meet again in a tumultuous rush below the obstruction. No one can wander much over this district without coming to the conclusion that these streams are very much smaller most of them now than they once were. Several facts point to this conclusion. Even after the heaviest rains their present carrying power is certainly insufficient to enable them to transport the enormous blocks with which we find their course encumbered; added to which the channels themselves are often much larger than are at present needed, and in some instances, as along the course of the Erriff River, are being actually now filled up with bog. Indeed, when we remember how lately the whole of this district was one great forest, traces—melancholy traces—of which are to be seen in every direction; when we come upon stumps of oak high up upon the bleak hill-sides, where now nothing taller than the bilberry or the bog myrtle grows; when, on the other hand, pushing out from the shore, we look over our boat-side and see the big "corkers" rising up out of the marl and sand in which their roots lie buried—seeing all this, and remembering how invariably the destruction of forests is followed by a diminution of rainfall, it is not difficult to believe that, numerous as are these streams and rivers now, they were once more numerous, and certainly very much larger than they are at present.

North of Galway Bay the country is comparatively flat, and there the rivers run chiefly between low ridges or hills of drift, whose sides are thickly strewn with the omnipresent granite boulders which there form such a prominent feature in the landscape. Much of this district is uninteresting and monotonous enough, yet even here the scenery along the river edge is often full of interest and beauty. As often as the stream takes a bend, a little triangular patch of intensely fertile ground accumulates upon the convex side, where the river year by year has deposited a share of the spoil which it has elsewhere filched. These little fertile plots are taken advantage of, and respectable crops of oats and potatoes grow right up to the brink of the water, which is only too

apt to overflow and destroy them when a freshet comes down from the hills. Here too, for the same reason, grow the loosestrifes and meadow-sweets, not scattered as elsewhere, but in a dense variegated jungle, which is repeated, leaf for leaf and petal for petal, in the smooth brown currents below. Nowadays the region is but a very thinly populated one. Looking around us, we see in every direction rows upon rows of granite boulders lifting their grey sides out of the purple heather, while in one direction, perhaps, and in one direction only, a cottage, or a couple of cottages, scarcely less grey and time-worn, may be seen peering disconsolately over the little hills. As for trees, often for long distances the stunted, much-enduring thorn-bushes are the only representatives of these to be seen; then a corner is turned, and suddenly, out of the wild melancholy moor, the stream rushes all at once into a tiny glen or valley green with brushwood, and gay with *Osmunda* and bell-heather and half-submerged willow-herbs—a genuine scrap of the old forest, where the gnarled oak stumps have sent up young shoots, and where the birch and willow and mountain ash dip downward so as almost to touch the water; then another turn, and the glen is left behind, and we are out once more in the open moor. No better way of getting to know this country can be devised than by following the vagrant course of one of these streams from its source to its finish, though it must be owned that the walking is far from invariably delightful. Where footpaths, with stiles or holes in the walls, have been left for the benefit of fishermen, there matters, of course, are simplified; this, however, is quite the exception. Generally the explorer has to make his own way over the tottering lacework walls, whose stones have a most uncomfortable predisposition to fall upon his toes. When there are bridges, which is seldom, they usually consist of a few logs, supported and covered over with huge stones in a primitive and Cyclopean fashion. On smaller streams the bridges are of loose stones only, the central arch being flanked right and left with lesser ones, so as to allow the water in flood-time to escape. More often still there are no bridges at all, or only at intervals so wide as to be practically useless; he is forced, therefore, to find out his own crossing, choosing between stumping bodily through the stream, or picking his steps along the slimy tops of the stones, where the water rushes and races under his feet at the rate of some forty miles an hour, or slips by in those long oily curves which always seem to draw our eyes down to them whether we will or no. Nor is this the only or even the chief part of his difficulties. What with crossing and re-crossing the stream; now skirting along where the projecting rocks nearly push him into the water; now out again into the open, clambering over huge boulders crouched like petrified dragons or mammoths in his path; now picking his steps through squelching bog-holes, or, again, balancing upon tussocks which give way under his tread—what with all this, and the endless climbing of walls, the explorer who has conscientiously followed one of these streams through all its windings and doublings will find that he has

about had his full share, and something more than his fair share, of walking by the time he again reaches home. In wild weather, when the wind is from the Atlantic, gales blow straight up these glens, cutting the tops off the small waves as they come careering over the stones, and apparently doing their best to drive the water up-stream again. A salmon leap is a fine sight on such a day as that. The water, no longer a series of insignificant trickles, comes down in a broad yellow gush, sending out great flakes of foam before it, to be carried back by the wind and lodged in creamy clots upon the trees and upon every scrap of herbage within reach. On such days, the whole glen above the fall may often be seen through a sheet of finely divided spray, caught from the fall and flung backwards by the wind. Standing above the leap, and looking down, we may see the big salmon and white trout crowding in the pool below us, their heads held well up-stream, despite the tug of the current in the opposite direction. Now and then one detaches himself from the rest, leaps upward, quivers a moment in mid-air, and then, in nine cases out of ten, falls headlong down into the pool again. The height to which both salmon and white trout will spring on these falls is astonishing, a leap of eight and ten feet being by no means unusual; and, however often defeated, after a few moments' rest the same salmon may be seen returning again and again to the assault. When thus intent upon business the fish seem to lose all their natural shyness, as if every faculty was for the moment concentrated wholly in the effort to reach the upper waters. Leaning over the rocks alongside of the salmon leap, we may stoop so as to actually touch with a stick the smooth brown backs so temptingly near at hand, and we shall find that they take little or no notice, merely moving to one side, without for a moment relaxing in their efforts to reach the top—a trait which unfortunately has the effect of making them fall only too easy a prey to the local poacher. No art of any sort is required to spear a salmon when, spent and exhausted, it reaches the top of its climb. Armed with a gaff—one extemporised out of a scythe—the loafing "gossoon" or village ne'er-do-weel may pick and choose amongst a crowd of salmon and white trout, and the silvery scales which catch the eye here and there amongst the wet grass are a proof only too convincing that he has not neglected his opportunities.

Throughout the whole of this part of Iar-Connaught the presence of the granite largely influences the character of the landscape. Where limestone predominates we usually get peculiarly transparent effects, delicate aerial greys and blues everywhere prevailing. On the other hand, limestone is cold, and even when weathered the rocks seldom present any particular beauty of detail. Granite, on the contrary, lends itself peculiarly to richness of colouring, no foreground being so rich as a foreground of granite rocks. Here, too, the granite has an especial beauty of its own, from the presence of large pink or violet crystals of feldspar, which in weathered places frequently stand out in bold relief, as though handfuls of pale amethysts had been sprinkled loosely over

the surface. Lichens, too, of a peculiar brilliancy and beauty cling to the granite, so that whatever else is wanting to the picture we may always count upon a foreground of ever-varying beauty and interest. A few of these boulders might nevertheless be spared with advantage! The multitude strewn broadcast over the whole face of the country here is almost past belief, and increases perceptibly as we approach the sea—here cropping up in the middle of a potato patch—there built into the sides of a cabin—now raised on stalks showing the amount of wear and tear which has gone on since they took their place—now sunk deep in the ground with only a corner appearing above the brown turf mould. Many show signs of having fallen from a height, lying broken as they fell, not flung about in fragments, but seamed through and through with a single crack, which has been further prized open by small stones falling in at the top and gradually working their way to the bottom; others again stand perched high overhead, or balanced upon the very brink of a cliff, as though ready to be launched upon some aerial voyage. Foreign rocks, quartzes, sandstones, and mica-schists, coming from the other side of the country, mingle occasionally with the granite, all contrasting strongly, in their rough-hewn masses, with the smooth glacier-ground rocks upon which they rest, and which are as smooth and as polished still as if the great ice-plane had only left them yesterday.

Now that we are approaching the coast we find that our stream widens. Strengthened by a couple of contributions, it has swollen well-nigh to the proportions of a river. No longer champing and churning, fretting against every stone in its bed, it rolls silently, conscious that at last it is nearing its destiny. Now fast and fleet, but with hardly a sound, it swirls along under the tottering banks, raking out all the loose stones and water-weeds; now widening into a mimic lake, and then again narrowing as it rushes between two steeply overhanging rocks. The last corner is turned. The grey hills of Clare rise over the parapet of the little bridge; between them and us flash the waters of the bay, with perhaps a solitary "pookhaun" or "hooker" working upon their way to Galway; under the bridge darts the stream, and with a flash and a ripple, and a quick noisy rattle over the stones, it has taken its last leap, and flung itself rejoicing into the arms of the sea.

From the hills we have wandered to the rivers; from the rivers let us now glance for a few minutes along the shore. Leaving Galway with its fringe of villas and of bathing-houses behind us, the road runs westward for many a mile, along a low coast, varied only by an occasional ridge or "esker" of granite drift. The shore itself mainly consists of loosely piled boulders, alternating with small sandy bays; the most unprofitable of all shores, by the way, for the marine zoologist, whose game is apt to be uprooted with every tide. Here and there, however, long reefs project seaward, and these being seamed with fissures

are worth exploring when they can be reached, which generally is only at the dead low tide. As we advance we find ourselves passing over an endless succession of low drift-hills with intervening valleys choked with boulders, the road keeping steadily west, the country growing wilder and wilder with every mile. At Barna a small grove of trees is passed, with grass and ferns growing rich and rank beneath their shadow. The trees themselves are nothing very particular,—a few moderate sized oaks, with ash, and a sprinkling of sycamores, and elsewhere doubtless pass them without a glance; here, however, we turn to look at them again and again with an interest quite pathetic, sighing regretfully as we pass out into the grey desolate moorland again. It were worth spending a few weeks in Iar-Connaught, if only to learn to appreciate trees for the future! Still on and on, and on, mile after mile, over a treeless, almost featureless tract, abounding in stones and abounding in very little else. A police barrack, green with ivy, up which some dog-roses are creeping, is greeted with enthusiasm. So, too, are a couple of villas, through whose gates we catch a pleasant vista of haycocks, and children playing, with the rocks and the tumbled surf beyond. Turning away from this somewhat lamentable foreground, we fix our eyes upon the range of terraced hills which stretch beyond the bay, and further yet again to where a line—worn by distance to a mere thread—shows where the far-famed cliffs of Moher lift their six hundred feet of rock above the sea. Westward again, the three isles of Aran stream across the horizon, so low and grey as hardly to be visible, save where the surf catches against their rock-girt sides; yet, looking intently, we can, even at this distance, distinguish the huge outline of Dun Connor, the great rath which crowns the middle island, and whose watch-fires when lighted must have been visible along the entire line of coast from the Mayo hills to the mountains of Kerry. About Spidal the scenery begins to improve. Far in the distance the Twelve Pins once more come into sight, long chains of lakes stretching northward to their very feet. Near Tully the coast is broken up into small brown creeks, where turf is being dug at low tide; islands dot themselves about in the bay beyond; a substantial-looking row of coastguard houses presently rises into sight, with chimneys hospitably smoking; yet another half-mile, and we find ourselves brought up short by the discovery that our road ends abruptly, all further advance in this direction being hopelessly at an end. We have in fact arrived at a regular *cul-de-sac*—one of the many to be found in Iar-Connaught. Only one road of any kind extends beyond this point, and that merely lands us at a fishing lodge some three miles or so further on. To reach the mountains which we see so distinctly before us, we must either retrace our steps to Spidal, and so round by Oughterard, a distance of over forty miles, or else take to the moors, and try to make our own way across country, an attempt which would probably result in our having to crave hospitality for the night at some cabin door, the chances of reaching any

other shelter before nightfall being problematical to a degree. A more unfrequented and a more unbefriended region is perhaps hardly to be found in Her Majesty's dominions than that same stretch of country between Cashla and Roundstone Bay. Life there is indeed reduced to the very elements. A few villages exist, thinly scattered over its surface, but hardly any roads connecting them—none certainly over which vehicles with springs could travel. Everywhere, too, the land is invaded by long arms of sea, still further increasing the difficulties of communication. For instance, as the crow flies, the distance between this point and Roundstone is barely twenty miles ; whereas, if the coast-line were followed, it would probably be found to extend to fully five times that length. The variety of sea-board, too, is extraordinary ; many of the islands being separated from the mainland by the merest streak of sea, the promontories, on the other hand, being in several instances connected by strips of land so low that a depression of a few feet would result in the setting free of a fresh crop of islands. The best, indeed the only, way of exploring this, the wildest bit of all Iar-Connaught, is to take boat, and to sail from headland to headland, and in and out of the archipelagoes of islands, which choke up every bay, and lie scattered in a thick fringe along the coast. There are several landing-places, but the most convenient probably will be found to be Roundstone, where the harbour is good, and a pier, built when dreams of an Atlantic packet station were in the air, stands ready for us to moor up our yacht or hooker. Here, too, is an hotel, and here, if the traveller is a naturalist, he can hardly do better than spend a few days, for not only is the shore itself unusually rich in zoology, but in the bay below he will find perhaps the best dredging-ground to be met with along the entire line of coast. From Roundstone the road lies direct to Clifden, which claims, and fairly claims I suppose, to be the capital of our mountain region. Thence, turning northward, we bowl along the wide coaching road, through the refreshingly clean little village of Letterfrack ; through the valley of Kylemore, where the towering crest of the Diamond stands a glittering sentry over our heads ; under steep wooded banks ; past more lakes and glens, and across a valley floored with bog, until we suddenly find that we have come full circle, and are back again at the foot of the Twelve Pins, the place from which we originally started.

Two more remarks before I end. First as to the question of popularity, or rather lack of popularity. It is undeniable that few regions equally come-at-able, and equally admittedly striking and picturesque, find so few admirers, not to say lovers, as Connemara. People come and go, drive along its roads, fish in its lakes, and even praise it after a fashion, but grudgingly ; they break into no raptures, as for instance over Killarney, and, what is still more significant, they seldom show any particular desire to return to it again. Now this probably may be set down to a combination of causes. Its hotels, for one thing, are not (with one or two exceptions) by any means equal to the demands of

modern sophistication; and this, deny it who will, is a very important factor in the matter. When a man's cogitations are secretly turning upon the badness of his breakfast, and the yet more doubtful prospect which awaits him at dinner, he is seldom, it must be owned, in the mood for very warmly appreciating scenery—especially when that scenery is admittedly somewhat of the bleak and hungry kind. Then, again, there is another and a very serious matter—the weather! Without going into the vexed and oft-disputed question as to whether this part of Ireland or the west of Scotland is the worst and the wettest, it may be admitted at once, and without further question, that it is bad—*very bad indeed*. Even while in the very act of abusing it, however, it is only fair to add that to this very badness, fractiousness, what you will, of the climate the scenery owes a share, and to my mind a by no means inconsiderable share, of its charm. The actual landscape doubtless is fine, but the actual landscape is nothing, literally nothing, until you have seen it under a dozen different moods: now grey and sullen; now fierce and passionate; now, when you least expect it, flashing out smile after smile, as only an Irish landscape can smile when the sun suddenly catches it after a spell of rain. At all events I can personally vouch for the fact of long-continued dry weather being anything but becoming to the scenery. Wanting the moisture which lends them atmosphere and distance, the mountains lose their aerial tints, become dull and grey, oppressed as it were with their own nakedness. I remember (the statement, by the way, is not perhaps a particularly credible one)—nevertheless as a matter of fact I *do* remember a summer in the west of Ireland, when for weeks together not a shower fell. The loughs sank low in their beds of rock; the bogs, seamed with cracks, showed as dry as so many high roads; the grass turned brown; the flowers withered; the mountains, hard as iron, stood out with every muscle in their stony anatomy brought into the strongest possible relief; now and then a wind got up, but no rain fell; every atom of moisture seemed to have vanished out of the atmosphere, and from morning till night the sun shone down with the same broad, unwinking persistency. It was exactly what everybody had always been wishing and sighing for, but somehow when it came no one appeared particularly gratified, and I can recall no very genuine expression of regret when at last one morning we got up to find that the sky had lost its brazen look, and that the greys had once more resumed their dominion. Nowhere, perhaps, in the world are there such greys as here—pale greys, dark greys, greys tinted with blue, and with green, and with rose-colour; greys merging and melting into one another, and into every other tint imaginable. Yet nowhere, on the other hand, is the colouring more gorgeous when now and then the sky does take a colouring fit. See it at the coming on of rain! A minute, perhaps, ago sky and sea were cloudless; suddenly as you look again the clouds have gathered, struck against the cold sides of the mountains, and begun to descend in rain, which goes sweeping like a pall

along the whole length of the valley, brushing against the flanks of the mountains, and passing away eastward, to be followed by a rapid burst of sunshine, bringing out the colours of the wet grass and smoking rocks ; in its turn passing on, reappearing for an instant in fantastic patches of light upon the distant slopes, and then again being swallowed up in the wide-spreading darkness of another sudden storm. The brilliancy and swift chromatic changes of these alternate sun-bursts and rain-squalls are indescribable, and, when seen from a height where they can be followed across a wide stretch of mountain and sea, they constitute a never-failing panorama—a drama the incidents of which are perpetually varying. One is in fact tempted to dwell far *too* much upon these transitory effects, because in a climate so capricious it is they rather than the [permanent features which create the most vivid and lasting impressions. Looking back into that private picture-gallery which most of us, consciously or unconsciously, carry about with us, two scenes at this moment start into my memory, and both, as will be seen, owe the fact of their being remembered at all, not certainly to anything in the actual scenery, but wholly and solely to the disposition of the lights and atmosphere.

The first was an effect of early morning seen from a window overlooking a wide tract of comparatively low-lying land, sodden with recent rain, where small pools caught the eye, leading it on to a large freshwater lough which lay beyond. Across this tract lay the arch of a rainbow, stretching from the grey of the water to the pale green of the hill-sides above. Not a rainbow which came and vanished, but a rainbow which hovered and lingered ; now fading until it was all but invisible, now unexpectedly flaring into sudden splendour again. And behind, the nearest hills were vague and dim with mist, while the distant ones were wholly hidden under a vast and capacious cloud-canopy, through which a pale sun shone upon the lough, so that it gleamed like a tarnished shield. All the greens and blues had vanished out of the landscape, but the yellows seemed brighter than ever ; the highest note of all being struck where the foam, driven in a long sinuous line across the lough, was washed in a broad palpitating drift against the yellow sand.

The second—an effect of a very different kind—occurred at the end of one of those utterly hopeless days when the weather, after holding out some slight promise in the morning, settles down to rain with a dull and dogged self-satisfaction, as if it never had rained before. For an hour or more we had been tramping homeward, knee-deep in drenching heather, and had just reached the crest of a ridge, overlooking the bay and the dull grey flanks of the opposite hills ; already the sun had set behind fourfold walls of cloud without showing itself, and without a moment's intermission of the pelting rain. Suddenly, when we least expected it, an arrow of red light was seen to shoot across the leaden-coloured sky. Another and another followed. Layer after layer of clouds caught the glow, until the whole heavily-laden floor of heaven was burning with an

intense and terrible conflagration, out of the very midst of which bars of molten metal appeared to rise, writhing and melting as in a furnace. Across all this swept a few lighter clouds, driven by the wind, each tipped with an edge of light, too intensely luminous to be looked at. A rush of colour, caught from the sky, spread itself over the dull face of the bay, the very stream at our feet being tinged with the pale opal-coloured tints. Nor was this all; for the clouds, which had been rolling overhead, began suddenly to descend; not in wisps and scrolls, nor in a thin impalpable veil, but altogether, in a vast and apparently solid body; rolling, pouring, gathering on the tops of the hills, and streaming down through the passes. It was a regular cloud-avalanche; and, despite our knowledge that we were too near home to run any risk by being enveloped in its folds, there was something curiously alarming in the sight of these huge summits rolling downhill, and approaching momentarily nearer. On and on they came, until suddenly, just as they were within about a hundred yards of us, their course was arrested by a fresh conflicting current of air. Here, then, the vanguard stood still, and began slowly melting, passing away in thin shreds and rags of vapour; but the rearguard still continued to pour in fresh reinforcements from behind; which, accumulating faster than they could be dissipated, reared themselves up in vast dome-like masses, towering thousands of feet in air, and gradually slipping downwards until they had enveloped not only us, but the whole valley in their folds. An hour later the overcharged atmosphere relieved itself by a couple of violent thunder-claps following one another in quick succession; after which the night grew calm and clear, and the next morning was glorious; but, alas! before the day ended the dull, persistent, pitiless drizzle had again set in.

E. L.



Upstairs and Downstairs.

A ROSY lass stands one evening in a bare-boarded room where the shadows are gathering quickly. Except for some wooden chairs and a table, and a few books upon some shelves in a corner, the place is empty enough; but the windows look out upon the river, upon a great vault of drifting sky, upon the floating vapours, and the thousand lights of London that are kindling along the banks and reflected into the stream. A small maiden stands perched upon a chair in the window, rubbing her nose against the pane and absorbed by the unaccustomed sight of the fiery lights and the rushing waters, and above all by the swinging creaks of a giant crane at work just in front of the house. The little one has come with a party of visitors, who together with the rosy girl, and a busy lady secretary, just leaving the room, represent for the moment what the report calls "the Central Office of the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants." And of all the long names ever given to a most simple and efficient piece of work this seems to be one of the longest. The whole thing is a necessary and very friendly bit of machinery, chiefly worked by the goodwill of the various people concerned in it. It is much to be wished that the number of those who are kindly disposed with help of money and good service could grow with the society itself, which has spread in one direction and another, and which, from the few hundreds of girls with which it began, has now near 3,000 upon its books—a statistician might tell us how many more there are growing up, a youthful ever-increasing congregation of many necessities and claims, troublesome enough, at times, but rarely ungrateful. These girls are divided among a certain number of associates, who are prepared to take an interest in their affairs. One could see the whole thing represented that evening at a glance—the books upon the shelf, the people who wish to help, the office, and the rosy lass herself, an item of the 3,000, who had come in by chance and been asked to tea. She stood a sturdy little figure in the usual smart hat and cloth jacket of "a general," with a round-faced and a bright-eyed and unmistakable "out for a holiday" air. She seemed quite prepared for conversation, but our first start was not propitious.

"Are you in service? Are you a little nurse?" I ask affably.

"I ain't in service; I'm *out* at service," says the girl, somewhat offended. "Nor I ain't a nurse neither; I'm a general servant; but master says I could be a housemaid any day. I don't like children myself," she goes on, "but ours ain't no trouble; they are such good little things. I minds the three; and I does the house and cleans out

the kitchen. I've had a very nice holiday" brightening up; "I've been round and round by myself, and across the bridge, ever so far, and then I come back here at last to see Miss D——."

"You look like a country girl," says one of the ladies. "Do you know your way about London?"

"I'm a London girl, I am. I was born in the New Cut. I knows my way. I ain't ever been in the country," says the child. "I've heard say mother was a country girl once, long ago. Mother's dead, she is, and father's in China, aunt says. He don't care nothen' about me (angrily), and I don't want to have nothen' to do with him; he never did nothen' for me. Miss D—— she found me my place."

And this was true enough, and Miss D—— told me afterwards of all the trouble she had to find the place, which had, however, turned out well. For many months before going there the girl had been tiresome and unruly, and no one would keep her. She was saucy, intractable, violent at times; but at last a special place was found, and in this special friendly effort lies the whole secret of this unpretending work. "We are often sorely puzzled what to do with them," said Miss D——. "Sometimes, as a last resource, we have been obliged to advertise, 'Will anybody take a difficult tempered or dishonest girl on trial?' and people actually do come forward in answer, and very often the girls we have despaired of do well after all."

Besides the Central Office of the Association there are branch offices all over London now—at Chelsea, Islington, Notting Hill, Paddington, North St. Pancras, South St. Pancras, Poplar, Southwark, Wandsworth, Westminster, Whitechapel, and Fulham. Each of these offices means a committee and a certain number of visitors, who undertake to help and care about a certain number of little girls who are from circumstances among the most absolutely friendless and helpless members of society. Their fathers have abandoned them or are dead; their mothers are dead, or mad, or drunk; they have no relations, or, worse still, only bad ones. They have been kept alive, indeed, by the State; but the State at best is more of an incubator than a parent, and this Association for years past has tried to help the children, with some heart and pity to spare for so much helplessness and childish misery.

When Mrs. Nassau Senior was appointed Inspector of Girls' Schools by Mr. Stansfeldt, she became convinced after experience (which experience she had gathered together during many previous years) that, although most of the masters and chaplains of district schools had made an effort (quite independently of their own hard work) towards continuing the care of the children after they had left the district schools, yet some further organisation was absolutely necessary for their proper supervision. Workhouse girls generally leave school for domestic service at about fourteen, and are not at that early age, any more than other girls, supernaturally endowed with every discretion and necessary experience of life. Some few happily constituted little creatures, established by chance in

comfortable homes, may have scrubbed on and prospered ; but the average of those who failed, who came to utter grief and disaster, to prison, and to the streets, to untimely death in hospitals and workhouse wards, was something cruel. About two-thirds of the girls whose careers were traced, with much pains and difficulty, by Mrs. Senior and her assistants were found to be utter failures. And, indeed, when one thinks of it, three clean shifts and half a dozen aprons and two pairs of stout shoes, or whatever the outfit may be, is scarcely to be regarded as a complete armoury against the many perils of life. Cruel mistresses exist, though they are not very common, I am told ; but what a crowd of insinuating temptations, of possible dangers exist as well ! The little stupid creatures come friendless and scared, or, worse still, impudently ignorant, to the little places where they are as much at the mercy of their own tempers as of their mistresses'. If temptation comes, if they succumb to it, if they break down from over-work, woe betide them ; they have not a friend to turn to. If they are dismissed, if the mistress is unkind, or only very poor and overstrained herself, if they fall ill and are sent to the hospital, or if they are sent away, they wander off from the area gate or the hospital door, with no human being to help them, with no refuge except, indeed, the casual ward of the workhouse, from which they come, and to which they must return.

The Association for Befriending Young Servants was formed upon the model of another which had been tried at Bristol by some kind women who felt the want of some such scheme of help and protection. Some meetings were called ; a certain number of ladies living in different parts of the town offered their services ; a certain number of guardians offered to assist ; lists of the girls as they left the schools were given to the Association ; various small offices were opened here and there ; girls were divided among the ladies willing to help them, and henceforth were visited at their places, distinguished apart, helped in case of necessity, advised and received into special homes when necessary.

One kind and most influential friend to the little maid-servants, no less a person than the Speaker of the House of Commons, addressing on their behalf the Lord Mayor himself and any kind-hearted aldermen that happened to take an interest in the subject, explained in a few terse and lucid sentences the whole working of the administration :—

“ The Speaker said that he had for the last two days laid aside the consideration of the Land Bill, and taken to the study of the reports of the Association. The composition of the Association had some peculiar features, for it was formed wholly of women. There were no men employed, except a very few who were members of the council and assisted its deliberations with their advice. The Association was founded by a lady—Mrs. Senior—whose memory would be dear to most of those present. The work of the Association was truly a woman's work from beginning to end. The friendless girls, for whose welfare the Association was solicitous, were divided into two classes—one class embracing desti-

tute and friendless girls struggling to earn a livelihood by domestic service in the Metropolis, who had been in pauper schools, and who, when discharged from pauper schools, were consigned to the care of the Association every year. The Association took care of them until they were twenty years of age; and there were now accumulated 917 destitute girls, over whom the Association kept careful watch.

"The girls discharged from the pauper schools were brought into correspondence with the Association in this way:—The Metropolis, as was well known, was divided into thirty-two unions, the guardians of most of which were in correspondence with the Association, and he hoped the day was not far distant when all of them would be. When girls left the pauper schools, they were placed in domestic service, and their names and addresses were sent to the Central Office of the Association by order of the guardians. The work of the Association was divided amongst eleven branches, covering the greater part of the Metropolis. The girls were each placed in communication with some branch of the Association according to their address, and each girl was assigned to a member of the branch, who made herself responsible for the care of her, and reported upon her condition and conduct from time to time to the committee. A principle of the Association which was of the greatest importance, and to the maintenance of which, he believed, much of the success which had attended the work of the Association was due, was the intimate relationship which existed between the lady visitors who undertook the care of the girls and the girls themselves.

"As to the second class of girls he had mentioned—those who had not been in the pauper schools—he found from the Report that no less than 1,600 had been during the past year placed in situations in domestic service, while many more girls had been assisted in other ways. This class of girls also was consigned to the care of lady visitors who watched over their welfare. Attached to each branch of the Association was a registry office, which had proved of great value in securing employment for the girls coming under the care of the Association.

"With regard to the financial condition of the Association, he found that the Central Office cost about 500*l.* a year, and the Central Home about 400*l.* a year. This Central Home of the Association was no doubt somewhat expensive, but was absolutely necessary, as the Association had to deal in the course of a year with (speaking roughly) nearly 3,000 girls, in whose circumstances there were many changes. The Society dealt with a very large number of girls, and the whole cost was 2,020*l.*, which gave an average of something like 15*s.* a head."

This does not seem a very exorbitant subscription for the results achieved—3,000 little charmaids helped and comforted, and scolded and advised, and kept from incalculable temptation and wretchedness; sheltered when homeless, nursed when they are sick, encouraged and comforted in every way.

If only some philanthropist or millionaire, instead of building

another empty palace, would bestow 2,000*l.* a year upon the Association, no more meetings, articles, or collections would be necessary; but then the millionaire would not have the pleasure of seeing his bricks and mortar piled up before his eyes.

The first office the Association ever opened was at Chelsea, a friendly little place which takes a benevolent interest in the various domestic fortunes and misfortunes of the neighbourhood. If you go there of a Monday morning you may find a room full of customers of various sizes, and an almost providential adjustment of different requirements. But indeed most of these offices are alike. There was one at B., where I spent an hour the other morning admiring the cheerful presence of mind of the manager, who seemed able to combine all sorts of difficult requirements. It was, as usual, crowded when I went in.

"Well, you see," a stout lady was saying confidentially, "I'm so much alone of evenings, my husband being out with the carriage, I want a girl for comp'ny as much as anything else. I don't want no house work from her. I want her to do any little odd jobs I can't attend to myself, and to mind the children. That was a good little girl enough you sent me, Miss Y——; but, dear me, she was always a crying for her mother. I let her out on Mondays, and Wednesdays, and Fridays; but she wanted to go home at night as well, and now she says she won't stay."

"It's her first place, m'am," says Miss Y——. "They are apt to be home-sick at first; but here is a very good little girl who has no home, poor child, she is quite alone. Fanny, my dear, should you like to live with Mrs. —— and take care of her nice little children? You might like to take her home with you now directly, m'am, and show her the place and the dear children?"

Smiling Fanny steps forward briskly, and off they go together. Then a pretty young lady, fashionably dressed, begins—

"That girl was no good at all, Miss Y——. Such a dance as she led me! She came and gave me a reference miles away, and, ill as I was, I dragged myself there; and when I got to the house she opened the door, and said her mistress was out and was never at home at all. I said at once, 'You don't want to come to us, and you haven't the courage to say so,' and then she shut the door in my face and ran away. The fact is, many girls don't like houses with apartments. Our first floor is vacant at present, but I hope it will soon be let; and I should be so glad to find a girl who would come at once, and who knows something of cookery, though my mother always likes to superintend herself in the kitchen."

"There is a young woman here who says she can cook," says the superintendent doubtfully, "but there seems to be some difficulty about getting her character. Do you think we had better write to your mistress for it, my dear?"

A poor, fierce, wildbeast-looking creature, who had been glaring in a corner, here in answer growls, "I don't know, I'm sure."

"Why did you leave?" says the young lady.

"Cos she had such a violent temper," says the girl, looking more and more ferocious.

"That is a sad thing for anybody to have," said the young lady gravely. At this moment a boy puts his head in at the door. "Got any work for me?" says he.

"No, no," cry all the girls together. "This isn't for boys; this is for females," and the head disappears.

"Well, and what do you want?" says the superintendent, quite bright and interested with each case as it turns up, and a spruce young person, who had been listening attentively, steps forward and says, looking hard at the young lady who had been speaking,

"I wish for a place, if you please, m'am, with a little cooking in it, where the lady herself superintends in the kitchen—a ladies' house that lets apartments, if you please; and I shouldn't wish for a private house, only an apartment house." At which the young lady, much pleased, steps forward, and a private confabulation begins.

While these two people are settling their affairs a mysterious person in a veil enters and asks anxiously in a sort of whisper, "Have you heard of anything for me, miss? You see (emphatically) it is something so *very* particular that I require, quite out of the common."

"Just so," says Miss Y—. "I won't forget."

"It is peculiar, and you won't mention it to anyone," says the other, and exit mysteriously with a confidential sign.

Follows a smiling little creature, with large round eyes.

"Well," said Miss Y—, who is certainly untiring in sympathy and kindness, "is it all right? Are you engaged, Polly?"

"Please, miss, I'm *much* too short," says the little maiden.

As we have said, it is not only the district girls who apply at these offices; all the young persons of the neighbourhood are made welcome by the recording angels (so they seemed to me), who remember all their names, invite them to take a seat on the bench, produce big books where their histories, necessities, and qualifications are all written down, and by the help of which they are all more or less "suited." Besides a home, a mistress, a kitchen to scrub, if they behave themselves they are also presented with a badge and honourable decoration, fastened by a blue ribbon, and eventually they are promoted to a red ribbon, the high badge of honour for these young warriors. And though some people may smile, it is, when we come to think of it, a hardly earned distinction, well deserved as any soldier's cross. What a campaign it is for them—a daily fight with the powers of darkness and ignorance, with dust, with dirt, with disorder. Where should we be without our little serving girls? At this moment, as I write by a comfortable fire, I hear the sound of the virtuous and matutinal broom in the cold passages below, and I reflect that these 3,000 little beings on our books are hard at work all over London and fighting chaos in the foggy twilight of a winter's morning.

It is a hard life at best for some of them ; so hard that they break down utterly in the struggle with temper and other tempers, with inexperience, with temptations of every sort. If one thinks of it one can imagine it all, and the impatience, and the petty deceptions, and the childish longings, almost irresistible, one might think, to little waifs who have no one to look to for praise if they are good or blame if they are naughty. And yet indeed they are not ungrateful ; they respond to any word of real friendship. "I am quite frightened sometimes to find how much they think of my opinion," said a good friend the other day, who has for some years past worked steadily for the Association. "They make me quite ashamed when they produce my wretched little notes out of their pockets." When I asked this lady about the children's comparative friendlessness, she said it was very rare to find them absolutely alone, but that in truth friends are often far worse enemies than loneliness. They come and take their poor little earnings. They lead them into mischief out of wanton wickedness, and desert them in their troubles. A girl came staggering into her office not long ago so ill that she could hardly stand. She had gone to her sister, whom she had always helped with her wages, and been in bed two days with fever, and then her sister would not let her stay, and turned her into the street, though she fell twice as she was dressing. It was a case of small-pox, and the poor thing was sent off to the Small-pox Hospital. "I went to see her there," said Miss T——, speaking quite as a matter of course. "The poor child began searching under her pillow and showed me a little scrap of a note I had written her a year before, which she had carried about ever since. One can scarcely believe," the kind lady said, "how they prize a little interest, a little friendly intercourse with some one who cares about what happens to them."

The letters which come to Miss T—— are of every variety. The first I take up comes from a curious sort of girl :—

"Dear Madam,—You will be surprised to hear that I have left Mrs. —, but she was so unkind that I left her on Friday, which was two days before the time was up, so she kept 2s. 6d. out of my wages. But before leaving I asked God to open some other place, but thought that He had not heard me ; and as I was going to the station, I thought of the woman that did the washing. She had been very kind to me, and I did not like to go home without saying good-bye to her ; and if I had not I should not have heard of this place, and then I found that my prayer had been heard. And the housekeeper under whom I am living is a Christian, and has taught me a great deal about the Second Coming, which troubled me so much that I want to hear more and more, and am glad to say am saved from the wrath to come, and never was so happy in my life ; and I only went to church twice in the ten weeks at Mrs. —, and I now go to chapel three times on Sunday and three evenings in the week.—Your humble Servant, B. B."

Another little girl, for whose theological leanings one certainly feels

more sympathy than for "B. B.'s," writes to say that since the family has moved she goes "to a very nice little chapple every Sunday evening." She thinks she likes it better than church; it is more understanding. And this seems an excellent summary in one simple word of the great vexed question of Dissent *versus* Church and State.

But neither chapel arousings nor church exhortings can touch these little creatures so closely as does that most divine function of human kindness which makes them truly feel their kinship to those who wish to be their friends: those who have been created true ministers to those who are in need.

"Would you be kind enough to get me a Place?" writes a very naughty girl, who is dismissed for complaining that she is starved (a fancy statement). "Do get me a place," she repeats; "please do—not near home—as I will promise you to be a better girl; and I do ask God to help me to be a good servant, as you told me in your letter you sent me three years ago; and it was such a nise letter that I have got it now, 1878, and shall not part with it, for I am so prode of it; and beleave me to be your humble servant, R. E."

Then follows a penitential letter from a nurse of twelve years old, and whoslapped the baby. She is very sorry. "I have done everything to make her come to me, and yet sometimes the baby will not come to me; sometimes she will love me and kiss me, and other times the baby will tell me to go away. I'll try very much to be good; I want to be good; and I go to church every Sunday afternoon with the little baby.—Yours respectfully, JEMIMA."

Some of the children's letters are really very touching; one writes of her mistresses, "They are such dear ladies." "I like my Mrs. and Mr.," says another. "Sometimes I feel very downhearted, for it is lonely in the nursery, and it brings all manner of thoughts of home and how I should like to see them." But wholesome distractions arise, for her Mrs. has said she "could clean a grate beautifully, and her stove looks very nicely."

The letters are almost all warm-hearted and full of expression of affection. "May God give you strength as long as you live on this earth," says one little scrub; "and I hope we shall meet in heaven, and we shall never part again there."

"Dear Miss,—I now take the pleasure of writing to you. Will you write to me as soon as you can? It would make me feel so very happy." "I think I have said all, as I have to get the supper ready now; so good night," writes another, finishing with, "My dear friend, I remain your obedient servant, MARY ANNE. Will you please tell me if I don't end my letters right? It is a long time since I have written to a lady."

Here is a litany to another friend of mine from a little grateful girl:—"O, I hope you have not forsaken me, for I don't feel at all comfortable, for you have been a dear kind loving friend to me, and I should miss you very much. You have been kinder than a mother. I hope

you had a happy Christmas, also dear Miss S. (the cook), and Emily ; it seems a long, long time since I see them, and let me give my love to them, and I remain, yours ebendiently, EMMA W." Emma is seventeen. She had a disreputable, drunken mother and sister, from whom she is always trying to get away. She may well say, "Kinder than a mother," poor child !

The other day I asked a neighbour, whom I shall call Lucia, if she could tell me anything about any of the girls she had known. "I have nothing at all romantic to tell you," said Mrs. Lucia with a smile. "They are all very commonplace girls that I have ever had to do with. One little thing called Eliza sometimes comes to play in the garden with my own little daughter. Eliza is a funny little creature, with a nice fresh face, though she was brought up in a workhouse ; but she never opens her lips. She is more fortunate than some of them, for her mistress, the grocer's wife, is a good woman. Not long ago I went to see Eliza, and Mrs. Grocer came in and asked me if I could do anything to help a school friend of Eliza's who was to be sent by the guardians to the chandler's round the corner. Mrs. Grocer declared that Mrs. Chandler was quite unfit to have any child at her mercy. She got tipsy and beat her maids, and turned them out at night into the street. It is always a little difficult to interfere," said Lucia. But the guardians were spoken to privately and inquiry was made. The story was found to be true, and the poor child was not allowed to go. "And don't you think," said kind Lucia, "that this is one very real way in which the Association can be of use ? It would be almost impossible, without some such means, to know the truth about the poor children."

The children may not know their friends' names or their existence as yet, but it is something after all to feel that there are people trying to find out the truth for them and patiently trying to enforce it.

My little girls gave an entertainment the other day which is not inapplicable to the subject. We had poked the fire again and again, and lit the candles and waited expectantly for nearly half-an-hour, the kettle was boiling, the buns were crying "Come, eat us ! come, eat us," the tea was getting cold. "Where can they be ?" says Molly, "can they have lost their way ?"

"Are the poor little girls walking round and round all alone in the streets, and haven't they got no mammas to hold their hands ?" says little Cuckoo, who has already appeared perched on one of the chairs at the central office.

"Perhaps a policeman will tell them where to go," says Nancy. Are the children talking metaphors ? One might almost think so, but there is no more time for speculation ; we hear a diffident tinkle at the bell, and after a minute's delay the company comes filing in one by one out of the dark street into the little lighted-up dining-room, where is spread a modest share of the night's festivities—some two pennyworth of

welcome, a few crackers and oranges, and a Christmas card or two. It is little enough, but the guests look with admiring eyes and seem more than satisfied and ready to enjoy the banquet. They are welcomed shyly by their young hostesses, and by a very short host with gold curls and steel buttons, and a white frock, who cuts a caper as they come in. "Oh, you dear little chap!" cries the company, catching sight of his beaming face, and rushing forward in a body. The poor little host is frightened, and pulls a piteous lip, and suddenly the phalanx stops short. "Take care, don't make him cry, poor little dear!" says one to another, and so they all take their places, still nodding and smiling at him over their shoulders. Then the banquet begins.

Fashions change about in names, as in every thing else. Edith, Emily, Amelia, who are the little washerwomen, sit down to tea, while Molly and Nancy hand the buns, and the little host, whose courage has come back, trots assiduously, without stopping for a moment, round and round the table with a plate of bread and butter at a surprising angle.

"I ironed his pinnyfore, m'am," says one of the little girls, looking after him.

The guests come from a small laundry establishment at Fulham, which was opened a year or two ago for their use and ours. It is hoped that high tempers may be there ironed a little smooth, and difficult natures soaped down and scrubbed, and that meanwhile fewer temptations may assail the little maidens than out at service, where they are left to their own resources. And this hope has been in a measure justified; for there are many girls unfit for domestic service, though they are strong and able to work. Some are saucy, some feel the inevitable worry of constant restrictions and demands, some of them have forfeited their character by petty pilfering and come here to earn another before they can start again. If you ask them their stories, they are much alike. They were taken to the District School when mother died, or left them. They were sent to service and didn't get on; out of the six here at tea, two had been in hospital after leaving their places, and the district lady had fetched them away. I ask after a girl who had not come with the others.

"Well, you see," said Edith, conversationally, "Elizabeth she went away one night from the home; she ran away to her mother, she did, and her mother she turned her into the street. She said she couldn't have her there no more, and so Elizabeth she come back to us and hid, and the girls gave her what they could; she slep' on the mangle at night, and all day long she sat in the coal-cellar. She used to tell us she could get half-a-crownd a day six days in the week if she left, but I don't think she got so much as that or she wouldn't have come back so soon. One of the ladies looked into the coal-cellar and found her sitting on the coals, and took her to another home."

All this is recounted by Edith in a most natural and easy-going manner. Next to Edith sits Emily, a pretty girl with fair hair and a pleasant placid smile, who takes up the tale.

"I don't mind the laundry work," says Emily. "I like it better than service. I was a very long time in my situation, and I didn't like it at all. Why didn't I like my situation? The lady she used to beat me till I was all over marks and bruises. I had to show my arms to the police after I left."

The little hostesses here gather round in sympathy and horror, while Emily continues with a certain complacency, "I don't think they put the lady in the papers; they put me in, so I was told. I was very short at the time, and she used to beat me about the head and shoulders too; some days she would go out all day and lock me in, and she would only leave out two bits of bread for all the time. She had a little boy of her own; she used to beat him just the same."

"And how did you get away?" says little Molly, breathless with pity.

"Well, you see Miss, she was a-bed one morning, and I was a lighting of her fire, and she had a cane by her, and she called me and began to cut at me, and I run out of the room, and the key was in the street door, and I went out and she being in her nightgown and couldn't come after me, and I run a very long way till I met someone who told me to go to the office, and when they see what a state I was in they sent for the police, and the police put me in the papers," says Emily, taking another bun.

Emily's is an extreme case, but it is one which tells its own lesson and proves the necessity for the existence of the Office of Help to which she ran by some hapless chance. The school from which she had been sent to this vile mistress was a country union not falling as yet into the Society's organisation.

"I was a nurse, I was," says a little creature about as big as a child of nine years old. "I had twins and three more to mind; they wasn't much trouble. I did the rooms and missus made weskits. I used to help her when I had time, but there wasn't much, for I did the cooking too, and took the children out in the perambulator. I left because I was so very ill and had to go to the 'ospital, and one of the ladies she called at the 'ospital, and I was sent to a covalest 'ospital, and Miss S—— took me into the laundry after that."

As the Speaker said in his speech, it is an absolute necessity to have some one or two homes connected with the Association where girls may be received and harboured for a time in between their places. Lodgings are dangerous and expensive, and besides this, some girls are absolutely unfitted for common domestic service, and require some sort of training to quiet them down. "When they are at work from breakfast to dinner, and from dinner to tea, and then till bedtime again, they have no time to be naughty," said one of their matrons. It must be remembered that these poor little creatures are no community of immaculate beings, but many of them belong to a most turbulent and inexperienced class. They are obstinate, credulous, hot-tempered, with every disadvantage of birth and

education to counterbalance the efforts of their well-wishers. One of these, a very delightful person, who is, happily for them all, still alive and prospering in her undertaking, told me that there is a saying among them, "that three Sutton girls would kill any matron." This lady told me that no one who had not gone through the actual experience could imagine the difficulty of keeping the troublesome among them in order and tolerably happy too. They are so ignorant and careless of opinion that there is at first scarcely any standard by which to get at them. Little by little they learn better things and gain some experience in the ways of the civilised world.

One of these little Bosjes girls had been chosen out to wait upon the matron of the Hammersmith Home, and to bring in her meals. When the young person was told she need not bring in the luncheon-tray with her face and hands all over streaks of black lead, and that she should always try to look nice and tidy whenever she came into the Superintendent's room, she put down the tray, stared in absolute amazement, and exclaimed, "Well! I call that cheek." There are many more stories such as this, which give one a curious impression of the state of these unsophisticated minds; and yet when I paid a visit to this very Laundry Home, I could not but notice the good understanding and pleasantness of manner which seemed to exist between the inmates. Certainly there was no sign of any struggle going on, but cheerful noises, and voices, and echoes of singing everywhere. The Hammersmith Home stands at the corner of Chiswick Lane, on the high road to Richmond; it is close to that pretty colony at Bedford Park; and the old Home where the little laundry girls live may well hold its own with the most successful of Mr. Norman Shaw's beautiful designs. The pretty old country house which was once a family dwelling place, and where wide oaken staircases and carved chimneys tell of some ancient dignity and splendour, is now promoted to new dignity, and shelters a wider family than it ever did before. Dwelling houses shelter people for years, make a pleasant background to their comfortable existence, but homes such as these take in a whole barren life, stock it with memories, teach it a useful craft, and make a future for it as well as a past.

"This is the good girls' room," said the Superintendent, opening a door into a tidy little square room neatly put up in order, and vacant. "She is just gone to a situation; she learned her work nicely while she was with us. This is the naughty girls' room," she continued, showing us another equally pleasant, with a neat little bed, and a cheerful wide view over the apple trees. "The naughty girls, alas! are always with us, and are more difficult to place than the good. Six months' training is supposed to be sufficient to change the one into the other; at all events, it is long enough to teach them all to do laundry work—they take to it very kindly—and scrub, and starch, and rinse, and iron from winter time to summer, fulfilling their appointed task in the economy of the world."

They had all been up very early the morning I saw them, preparing for one of the festivals of the Church. On these occasions the neighbouring rector, the curate, the choristers, all come out resplendent in dazzling white robes, and the little girls peep from their places and wonder which particular surplice is their own handiwork, which is their own special saint out of the great white assemblage round the Communion-table. It is affecting to think of our little scrubs preparing Easter splendours and ceremonial; and meanwhile, as we have said, let us hope our little washerwomen themselves are being starched into shape and washed and smoothed into order.

The Superintendent led the way to the pretty old drawing-room, with the arched windows, where some stately lady had perhaps once lived, and looked out across the fields towards the river; now the yellow winter light shone in upon the heads of the busy girls as they bent over their ironing boards. A stove was heating the irons in the centre of the room, and the floating trophies of their day's work hung across the room from long lines. Down below again were wash-houses, and cheerful mermaids perched upon planks in a floating sea were singing at their work.

With all the dreary things there are to think about, it is as well to have some bright places to turn to, and of these surely none are more cheering to melancholy souls bemoaning the darkness of humanity than the gas becks and beacons that are flaring cheerfully and lighting up the hours of hard-worked, scant-paid little toilers. I have no room here to enumerate the various useful busy undertakings and admirable suggestions and enterprises which have been started of late, but I cannot refrain from here mentioning (quite apart from the Association, but closely connected with it in warm and true sympathy with those it concerns) a most successful club or guild for working girls, which was started some little time ago by the Hon. Miss Stanley, in Soho.

The lights are bright, the big room is made warm and ready, the girls come in after their ten hours' and twelve hours' work. There are books for them and papers; there is companionship and a pleasant hour after the long day's grind. There are classes to attend if they wish it. The working girls themselves thoroughly like the place, and enjoy coming to it, and willingly pay twopence a week out of their scant earnings for the club membership; they chatter and sing and laugh as girls should do. One lady or another attends regularly. They are made at home, welcomed warmly to good wholesome things, and kept out of the temptations of the streets. "Will Miss Smith favour the company with a song?" Miss Smith, blushing and laughing, stands up and sings a ditty as merrily as some bird might sing it to its small brown companions in a woodland glade.

There is no great machinery about this, no special appeals and protestations any more than in the working of the society about which I have now been writing. I am told that as the society extends its operations it finds more and more difficulty in meeting the necessary expenses

of its work. It is to be hoped that, with the help of many who are kindly disposed, neither help in money nor in good services may be found to fail. Two thousand a year does not seem so very large a sum to count upon when it is to be spent to such good purpose and with so much common sense, and common sense seems on the whole to be one of the most uncommon and most valuable of qualities, and far beyond gold. It means all sorts of things—unselfishness, modesty, constancy, patience and hopefulness, a sense of duty in the place of vague and passionate impulse, and intelligent sympathy shown by quiet and repeated good offices, which will bear more and more fruit in good time.

The Sleeper.

I.

The fire is in a steadfast glow,
 The curtains drawn against the night;
 Upon the red couch soft and low
 Between the fire and lamp alight
 She rests half-sitting, half-reclining,
 Encompassed by the cosy shining,
 Her ruby dress with lace trimmed white.

II.

Her left hand shades her drooping eyes
 Against the fervour of the fire
 The right upon her cincture lies
 In languid grace beyond desire,
 A lily fallen among roses;
 So placidly her form reposes,
 It scarcely seemeth to respire.

III.

She is not surely all awake,
 As yet she is not all asleep;
 The eyes with lids half open take
 A startled deprecating peep
 Of quivering drowsiness, then slowly
 The lids sink back, before she wholly
 Resigns herself to slumber deep.

IV.

The side-neck gleams so pure beneath
 The underfringe of gossamer,
 The tendrils of whose faery wreath
 The softest sigh suppressed would stir.
 The little pink-shell ear-rim flushes
 With her young blood's translucent blushes,
 Nestling in tresses warm as fur.

V.

The contour of her cheek and chin
Is curved in one delicious line,
Pure as a vase of porcelain thin
Through which a tender light may shine;
Her brow and blue-veined temple gleaming
Beneath the dusk of hair back-streaming
Are as a virgin's marble shrine.

VI.

The ear is burning crimson fire,
The flush is brightening on the face,
The lips are parting to suspire,
The hair grows restless in its place
As if itself new tangles wreathing,
The bosom with her deeper breathing
Swells and subsides with ravishing grace.

VII.

The hand slides softly to caress,
Unconscious, that fine-pencilled curve
"Her lip's contour and downiness,"
Unbending with a sweet reserve;
A tender darkness that abashes
Steals out beneath the long dark lashes,
Whose sightless eyes make eyesight swerve.

VIII.

The hand on chin and throat downslips,
Then softly, softly on her breast;
A dream comes fluttering o'er the lips,
And stirs the eyelids in their rest,
And makes their undershadows quiver,
And like a ripple on a river
Glides through her breathing manifest.

IX.

I feel an awe to read this dream
So clearly written in her smile;
A pleasant not a passionate theme,
A little love, a little guile;

I fear lest she should speak, revealing
The secret of some maiden feeling
I have no right to hear the while.

X.

The dream has passed without a word
Of all that hovered finely traced;
The hand has slipt down, gently stirred
To join the other at her waist;
Her breath from that light agitation
Has settled to its slow pulsation;
She is by deep sleep re-embraced.

XI.

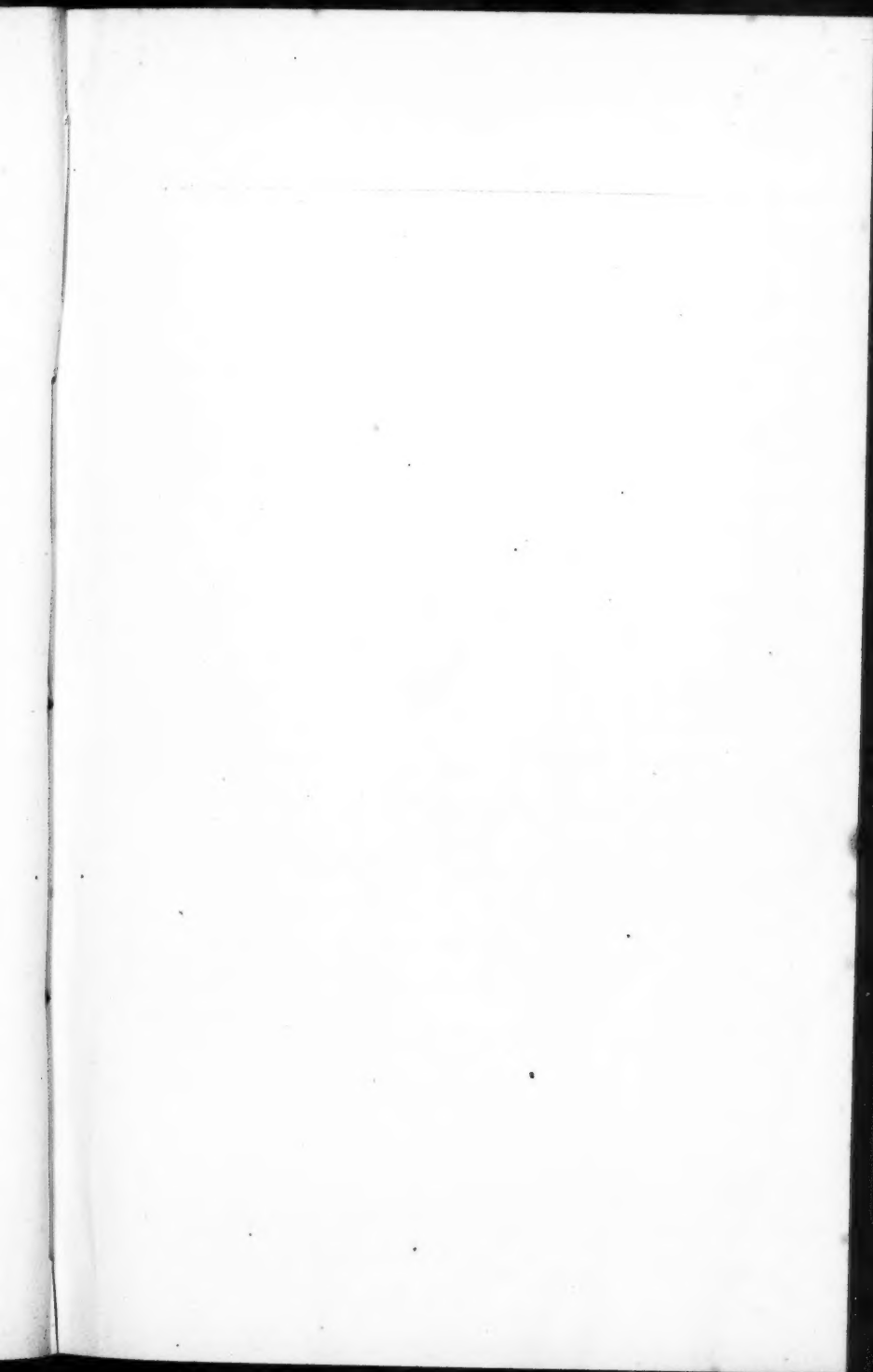
Deep sleep, so holy in its calm,
So helpless, yet so awful too;
Whose silence sheds as sweet a balm
As ever sweetest voice could do;
Whose trancèd eyes, unseen, unseeing,
Shadowed by pure love, thrill our being
With tender yearnings through and through.

XII.

Sweet sleep; no hope, no fear, no strife;
The solemn sanctity of death,
With all the loveliest bloom of life;
Eternal peace in mortal breath:
Pure sleep, from which she will awaken
Refreshed as one who hath partaken
New strength, new hope, new love, new faith.

January 1882.

JAMES THOMSON.





HE STOOPED TO GATHER THEM.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER III.

SHADOWS AND A GHOST.



MRS. EASTWOOD'S hopes with regard to the weather were not destined to be fulfilled. The next day was mild and grey, with persistent, softly-dropping showers which kept all the party indoors. "Better to-day than to-morrow," said Charley, who had fixed Friday for Effie and himself to visit some friends at Brookfield. Good-tempered as he was, it vexed him to see his holiday melting away in these soft spring rains, when there were so many walks he would have liked to take with

Rachel. Nor could he find much occupation indoors. When he had done with the newspaper, he was reduced to studying the sky from the front and back of the house alternately, and strolling in and out of the rooms to see what other people were doing. "Oh, here's Charley!" said Fanny on one of the occasions. "Now please don't tease Fido—he has just gone to sleep on his cushion, poor dear!"

"I tease Fido!—what next?" said Eastwood. "I'm sure you tease him much more than I do—you are always washing the miserable little beast, and combing him, and fussing after him, and putting ribbons round his neck—only he hasn't got any neck, he's so fat."

"Well, I know you do tease him, and he doesn't like you," Fanny replied as she threaded her needle. "Now, Effie, doesn't he tease him?"

"Not very often, I think," said Effie. "Only now and then. You're a nice, kind boy, Charley dear, but you are very cruel on a wet day."

Rachel looked up from her book. "At that rate you'll be something terrible if this rain goes on," she remarked.

"Shan't I?" said Charley. "I should think the effect would be permanent." He meditated a little. "Lucky I wasn't one of Noah's sons—fancy me shut up in the ark with all that live stock! But you needn't trouble yourselves, you two; I'm never going to tease a dog again."

"I'm very glad to hear it," said Fanny.

"Never again," Charley repeated in a tone of regret. "I'm a reformed character."

"What's the cause of the reformation?"

"Oh, I saw the error of my ways a day or two ago," he replied. "I don't know about cats—you had better keep that kitten out of my way, Effie. But I'm never to tease dogs any more—especially tied-up ones. I'm not sure that a mad bull-dog, loose, would come under this rule; perhaps I might be allowed to amuse myself with that." He turned to Miss Conway. "What do you think?"

"I should think perhaps you might—on a wet day."

"Oh, yes, on a wet day, of course." He stood with his hands in his pockets, looking down. But he felt so strong an impulse to kick Fido, who lay, snow-white and snoring, at his feet, that he judged it prudent to fly from temptation, and went away to smoke a pipe in the porch.

The only pleasant interruption to the monotony of the day was the arrival of a messenger from the Hall. Effie happened to meet Mary in the passage, and came running into the drawing-room, where Rachel, book in hand, leaned by the window, looking out into a bower of damp greenery, and listening to the gentle falling of the rain.

"Look!" cried Effie, "look what lovely flowers Mr. Lauriston has sent me!"

Rachel rushed to see them. "Oh, how beautiful! How very beautiful! That's because of your song last night, Effie!"

"It's worth while singing songs, then," said the girl coolly, as she laid her treasures out one by one. "Oh, aren't they sweet?" she exclaimed, stooping over the delicate blossoms. "Rachel, weren't we silly to go hunting for wild flowers yesterday?"

"They are pretty, too," said Miss Conway, "only they faded so."

"But not pretty like these." She stood looking at the tender waxen petals on their background of dusky green cloth. "Rich people have all the nice things," she said with a sigh. "He never goes out and picks a bunch of rubbish out of the hedges."

"Mr. Lauriston? No, I don't suppose he does."

"No, and Mrs. Lauriston didn't, I know," said Effie with a little nod. "Not when she could have all the flowers she wanted. She made believe she liked them, I suppose, when she was a shepherdess. So would I make believe I liked them now and then if I had the others every day."

"Effie, we heard more than once how charming wild flowers were, when we went out yesterday."

"That was because I couldn't get any others. Let's turn out those shabby old things of Fanny's, and put these beauties in." Effie sighed again as she began to arrange them, and felt that Fate was very cruel to her. She remembered the time when she could please Mr. Lauriston without an effort, when she might sit on his knee, and play with his watchguard, and turn the ring on his finger, and kiss him, instead of having to keep up the conversation and behave like a young lady. She did not particularly wish for any alteration in herself, but she thought that Mr. Lauriston might be changed in many respects with advantage. Why wasn't he easy to talk to, like Charley, or like ——? Effie had had more than one harmless little flirtation already, and could have supplied a name or two to fill up the blank.

She felt this cruelty of Fate still more that evening when Mr. Lauriston sent his carriage to fetch them. As they rolled easily and swiftly through the park, Effie remembered what miles and miles her little feet had trudged through country lanes, and recalled her experience of cab and omnibus in London streets. For the time the hothouse flowers were half forgotten, and the possession of a carriage became the height of felicity. Rachel meanwhile sat opposite, and looked with obedient interest at every view which Mrs. Eastwood pointed out. "You don't see it to advantage," said the latter regretfully. But Miss Conway liked the green dimness of the judiciously designed plantations, and the softened outlines of the irregular swells, as she saw them first that evening through a thin veil of rain. She was almost sorry when they arrived at the Hall, where Effie, alighting, added two tall footmen to her dream of joy.

Mr. Lauriston had invited Mr. Brand, the curate, to meet them. Rachel had already seen him in church—a dark, rather handsome man, with a narrow forehead and a determined mouth. The young ladies of the parish worshipped him, and he accepted their adoration with unaffected ease as a matter of course. Even before they went to dinner he began to talk of parish matters to Fanny and Effie, while Mrs. Eastwood monopolised Mr. Lauriston, and boldly questioned him about the little boy.

"He is very well, thank you," was the reply. "No, I never see him in the evening—don't such young people go to bed before this time?"

Well, yes, Mrs. Eastwood had no doubt that he would be in bed. She was glad to hear he was well.

"Yes," Mr. Lauriston repeated, "he is very well. Not a very strong child, they tell me, but he never seems to be ill."

"A great favourite, of course?" she said with a beaming smile, though in fact she had her doubts. "I daresay his papa spoils him, if the truth were known."

"I believe I'm not bound to criminate myself, am I?" he replied.

"I suppose he goes with you to-morrow?" she said, returning to the charge. "Or does he stay on at the Hall while you are away?"

"Oh, no—my sisters will take him. I'm a rolling stone, you know."

"Your sisters? They have not been to Redlands for a long while, I think? I hope they are well—Miss Mary especially."

Mr. Lauriston smiled. "Not Miss Mary now—you did not know that she married a year and a half ago," he said, as he offered her his arm, and they went to dinner. He foiled most of her questions, and she was obliged to be satisfied with learning that Miss Mary Lauriston was Mrs. Clarke, and, vaguely, that she had gone to America with her husband. "Henrietta and Eliza will take the child; they have more room than they want in their house," he said.

Miss Conway was hardly as much amused during dinner as she had been the day before. She sat by Mr. Lauriston (for he had asked Mrs. Eastwood to take the head of the table, which she did with much dignity), but Mr. Brand led the conversation to local matters which she did not understand, and Charley kept up a dropping fire of unconnected remarks. She found it difficult to talk to Charley with Mr. Lauriston at her side, and she hardly acknowledged to herself that she would have liked to talk to Mr. Lauriston. "Do you dine in this great room when you are quite alone?" she asked him once when the question was covered by the general conversation.

"Always," he said. "You think it dreary?"

"I don't know. I don't think I should like the shadows in all the corners if I were alone."

"No? They are very good company when you are used to them. I daresay many people would call it dreary; but do you know, Miss Conway, I think I fancied you would like my room."

She shook her head. "Not if I were by myself. I would have a little room and light it well."

"It would be difficult to light this"—he began, when Mr. Brand was heard saying,

"We have been talking about the possibility of getting a cottage for mission-work, and a night-school, in Brook Lane, Mr. Lauriston. Something ought to be done there. Can't you help us?"

He answered; but Rachel, who knew nothing of Brook Lane, took advantage of a momentary silence on Charley's part to glance round the room, and picture to herself the little island of light in the dusk, with Mr. Lauriston sitting there all alone. She could see it vividly enough, till all at once the thought of his dead wife came into it, and the girl sat with drooping eyelids, wondering what those two had looked like in the lamplight together, and whether that beautiful memory lingered in the shadows that Mr. Lauriston found good company. Did he think of her in those lonely evenings, or not? Rachel could have believed either

answer to her question. It was absurd—she knew it was perfectly absurd—he was only a gentlemanly, well-dressed man, with quiet manners and a gentle voice, who had just refilled his glass as he sat by her side, and was pushing the decanter to Mr. Brand, yet it seemed to her as if in some way he belonged to the shadow of which he had spoken.

Mrs. Eastwood was eager to tell her girls the news she had learned from their host, and to exclaim over it with them. "Only think," she said, when they had left the gentlemen to their wine and were safe in the drawing-room, "Mary Lauriston is married! Fanny, you must remember Mary?"

"Oh, I remember them all. Mary was the fair one—she was younger than the others."

"But she was older than Mr. Lauriston," said Effie scornfully. She must be ever so old now."

"Well, she is about five or six and forty," Mrs. Eastwood allowed. "Still, she was the youngest of the three, and much the best-looking. I think Adam Lauriston was fond of her in his own way, and I always thought she might have got on all right with her stepmother if it hadn't been for the others. But if ever there were a couple of old cats—they were enough to make mischief with anybody!"

"I remember them," said Effie. "I remember their coming once when I was quite little and walking round the garden with papa."

"Well, even he didn't like them!" Mrs. Eastwood exclaimed triumphantly, "though we were all saints and angels according to your papa. And now Adam Lauriston is going to send that poor child to live with them! I shouldn't have wondered if Mary had been there—but to send a child to those two old maids!"

"Poor little wretch!" said Fanny.

"And Mary married more than a year! I wonder I never heard of it. I shouldn't be much surprised," Mrs. Eastwood remarked sagely, "if they weren't pleased with the marriage for some reason."

"Perhaps Miss Henrietta thought he ought to have asked the eldest first," said Effie. "I say, Rachel, let's go round the room and look at the pictures and things while we are by ourselves. I never had the chance before."

The gentlemen did not stay very long in the dining-room. It would have been difficult to find three men who had less in common, and, in spite of Mr. Lauriston's best endeavours, the conversation flagged. He tried politics, but without success. Charley was a Conservative, and a strong partisan. It was evident to Charley that all who differed from him were not only blind, but wilfully blind, to the truth. It was neither very easy nor very profitable to discuss political questions with him, but at least in so doing you knew what you might expect. Now Mr. Brand tested all statesmen by their Church principles—that is, by their opinions concerning vestments and candles—and in his talk with

young Eastwood this classification led to an occasional agreement which was far more irritating than any discord. That was the last attempt at conversation, and, after its failure, they adjourned to the drawing-room. Mr. Lauriston, pausing on the threshold to let his guests precede him, looked across the room at the girls who had just completed their tour of inspection. Effie had thrown herself into a stately old-fashioned arm-chair, a chair which seemed to proclaim itself the master's seat. The childish little figure was half lost in its depths; but the light gleamed on the soft white folds of her dress, and on her bright face as she leaned forward, speaking to her friend. Mr. Lauriston, however, hardly noticed Effie. He looked at Miss Conway who stood on the hearth-rug, erect and slender, idly fanning herself with a fan of peacock feathers which she had picked up. It was like a picture, he thought—the girl's head with the golden-brown hair drawn back and wound in a soft, shining knot, the dark eyes, the delicately tinted face, against the carved white marble of the great chimney-piece. He saw it all in one quick glance, for Rachel looked round when she heard them coming, and paused, with the fan drooping in her hand. Eastwood went straight up to her, and Mr. Lauriston stood discreetly aside.

His turn came a little later, however, while Mr. Brand was turning over a portfolio of photographs, and talking to Fanny and Effie. (If Miss Conway had been willing, the curate would very readily have added her to his listeners, experience having given him confidence in dealing with numbers.) On the outskirts of the little group sat Mrs. Eastwood, inspecting a photograph through her gold eye-glass from time to time, with gentle little nods of which she was happily unconscious. Charley, as he sat near Rachel, rested an elbow on the table, and turned the leaves of the last *Punch*. Apparently his occasional remarks did not engross all her attention, for she raised her eyes to Mr. Lauriston, who had been answering a question about one of the photographs, and was turning away. "We were looking at your pictures before you came in—Effie and I," she said.

He came directly and took a chair by her side. "You couldn't see much of them by this light, I'm afraid. I'm very unlucky, Miss Conway; there are some things I should like to show you, and I haven't the chance."

"Thank you, you are very kind. I should have been very pleased."

"I have travelled a good deal," he went on, "and one picks up things—treasures one thinks them. And to find some one else who will think so too—or successfully make believe to think so—is one of the greatest pleasures I know. I doubt you wouldn't make believe, Miss Conway, but there is the other possibility."

"I hope I wouldn't make believe," she said with a smile. "But I can't say; I might try, perhaps."

"It would be very kind, you know. But I don't think you would.

You didn't pretend to like my gloomy rooms. If I had only known, I would have bought up all the candles in Redlands, and lighted them in your honour."

"Perhaps it was just as well you didn't know. And I only said I didn't like shadows when I was alone. Your house is too big, Mr. Lauriston, and it sounds hollow. There is room for too many shadows in it; but I don't mind them to-night, as I am not alone."

There was a pause. "Do you like ghosts? I have a ghost belonging to me," said Mr. Lauriston. "Did you know that?"

She shook her head. "It won't do, I won't be frightened. People don't have ghosts in elegant modern mansions. I don't believe in it."

"Ah, but my ghost is not to be disposed of in that summary fashion. It lives out of doors."

"In the park, then?"

"No, in the garden, in a wide grassy walk between two high yew hedges."

"Is it dreadful to look at?"

"Not at all. At least I hope not, for the credit of the family, since it is my great-great-grandmother. She comes hurrying down the middle of the walk, and looks backward over her shoulder as she comes."

"Did you ever see her, Mr. Lauriston?"

"Never; and never knew any one who did."

"It seems to me," said Rachel with a smile, "that this is only the ghost of a ghost story."

"So much the better," said Lauriston. "That is the charm of it. It keeps out of the way, and cannot be explained into something prosaic. I hate a clumsy, meaningless ghost; but this story of mine is just a shadowy expression of the tradition that the walk was once haunted by a most miserable woman."

Rachel looked at him with startled eyes. "Why did she haunt it? Did she do anything dreadful?"

"Nobody knows that she did anything at all."

"Mr. Lauriston, you and your story are very mysterious."

"Shall I explain?" he said. "But mind, I vouch for nothing. This—what shall I say?—this distant grandmother of mine had a boy of whom she was passionately fond. He was not the heir, for her husband was the second son, and the elder brother had left a little child, younger than her own. There is a deep pond in the garden close to the end of this walk I told you of, and one day the little fellow fell into it and was drowned. The nurse who ought to have been with him heard him scream, and hurried to him by the nearest way, (which was not the yew walk) but she had some distance to go, and was too late. It was all simple enough, and there was nothing to connect my great-great-grandmother with it in the slightest degree."

"No," said Rachel wonderingly.

"But after that time, according to the story, her people noticed that

she was changed. She walked continually in the yew walk, but never turned the corner by the pond. Naturally they said that she had been there the day the child was drowned, and might have saved him."

"Do you suppose she *was* there?"

"I can't say," he answered with a smile. "It sounds unpleasantly probable."

"But it is horrible!" said Miss Conway. "I don't like your story at all, Mr. Lauriston. I can fancy her walking there, and never daring to look round the corner, because she would not look that one moment!" There was a pause. "And what became of the boy for whose sake she did it? Did he die?"

"He died," said Mr. Lauriston gravely, "at the age of eighty-three."

"What—he lived? But was he happy? was he fortunate?"

"He married a beautiful heiress, was universally respected, paid off most of the mortgages, and left the estate to his grandson, my uncle. You seem disappointed, Miss Conway, but it was a very good thing for the family."

"No; but I felt as if it ought not to end so," she answered. "I felt as if she ought to fail, somehow, and instead of that she succeeded after all."

"Well, if she had failed, that would have been tragic, no doubt, but this may have been more tragic still. Failure leaves you your ideal; you can think, 'If it had been!' But suppose you succeed and find that it was not worth while"—he shrugged his shoulders.

"I wonder whether she thought it *was* worth while," said Miss Conway.

"Assuming the truth of the story, I suspect not."

"I don't see why you think not."

"Well, from the nature of things in general—will that do? If it will not do, I will remind you that the people who knew her best thought not, or they would not have seen her haunting the yew walk."

Charles Eastwood, who had committed himself to the prediction that Mr. Lauriston and Miss Conway would get on together, was very well content to hear the quick interchange of speech going on at his elbow. He had been listening, too, as he glanced at his paper, and of course he knew what it was all about. They were talking about ghosts. Now he saw the *Field* lying at a little distance on the table, and pushed his chair rather further to reach it. Rachel turned her head, looked at him, and there was a brief pause before she spoke again.

"But, Mr. Lauriston, perhaps she loved him so much that she thought it was worth while in spite of all her suffering."

"Again I think not, Miss Conway."

"Why not?"

"If she could have been capable of such love as that she would have been brave enough to face the consequences. Afraid of that pool!

Why she would have played ducks and drakes across it, unless"—Mr. Lauriston suddenly recollected himself—"unless she thought that perhaps people might consider it improper. No, it was an impulse, not a great passion. And she was thinking of herself, not of her boy, when she haunted the yew walk. Don't you agree with me?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Perhaps. I don't pretend to be a judge."

"Why not? We all know how women can sacrifice themselves for their children, or their lovers. Don't you think the love might deaden the pain? One would be sorry to suppose they always regretted it," said Mr. Lauriston drily.

"I didn't mean that," was her hurried reply, while the colour came into her face. "I only meant that I was not romantic; I don't know, I am sure, whether I should be capable of a great passion or self-sacrifice under any circumstances—most likely not; and so I could not pretend to decide what a woman might do or feel. That was all I meant."

"I understand. You must allow me to draw my own conclusion from your doubt."

She looked curiously at him. "Tell me what it is, Mr. Lauriston."

He smiled. "Well, since you ask me, if I may say so, I conclude that there is a possibility that you *are* capable."

"I don't see why—you don't know me well enough to tell," she said, while her colour deepened.

"I never meant to imply that I did know you well enough to tell. I was only judging by a general rule. If a woman is certain that she is capable of a great passion," said Mr. Lauriston lightly, "one suspects that she bases her certainty on half a dozen lesser ones. If she doubts—one may at least doubt too."

She laughed, a little uneasily. "Well, I don't want to prove my capability," she said, half to herself. Mr. Lauriston arched his brows, but did not speak. "I don't," she repeated. "If a good fairy could give me my wish, I would choose to be always quiet, and peaceful, and safe, and commonplace—yes, I would choose to be commonplace."

Mr. Lauriston took the feather fan which lay idly in her lap, and turned it in his hands. "It is a curious wish," he said. "But I don't think it sounds unreasonable. I should say there could be hardly any difficulty about bestowing that boon on one more."

"But I mean it—I mean it, really. I'm not ambitious. I hope and trust that I am just fit to lead a commonplace life like my neighbours."

"You think that? Well, if so—pardon me, Miss Conway—your looks belie you."

"So much the worse for my looks!" she answered hotly. "I'm very sorry, but I do hope it."

"So much the worse! What next?" said Mr. Lauriston. "First I am to believe that you wish to be commonplace. Well, it is an effort, but I consider faith my strong point. But this is too much. I am to

believe that a woman not only wishes to *be* commonplace—let that pass—but to *look* commonplace! Forgive me, but I can't."

He smiled as he said it, and Rachel smiled too, and answered honestly, "Well, I'm not quite sure about the looks myself. We won't say anything more about them, please."

"Are you sure of the rest?"

"Yes!" She turned her head and met his eyes. "Oh, you may laugh; I know you think I am talking nonsense, but it is true."

Mr. Lauriston slightly bent his head in token of acquiescence. "So be it," he said. "Must I wish you success in the attainment of your ideal?" It might be a mere accident, but he fixed his eyes as he spoke on Mrs. Eastwood, who was just getting the gold eye-glass into position to examine Salisbury Cathedral.

"Looking east, mamma; but you've got it sideways," said Fanny.

Miss Conway looked defiantly at Mr. Lauriston. "No, I won't trouble you for your good wishes," she said.

"Thank you. They would be rather grudgingly given, I'm afraid."

There was a pause. She held out her hand for the fan, which he resigned. "Is it—is it very strange to wish not to be peculiar in any way?" she said presently. "Don't you think people are happier so?"

"It is difficult to put happiness into figures and add it up," said Mr. Lauriston. "How many days of a comfortable life will equal a moment of rapture?"

The fan moved slowly to and fro, and Miss Conway did not attempt an answer. "I suppose your great-great-grandmother wasn't commonplace," she said after a time. "And she wasn't happy. People whose ghosts walk can't be quite commonplace, I think."

Mr. Lauriston smiled. "After all, I know very little about my great-great-grandmother. The whole story, you perceive, rests on nothing more than the facts that she walked in that particular path, and that her spirits were not good. Still I admit that she was not altogether commonplace. But I didn't propose her as an ideal; in fact I think we decided that she was weak."

"Yes, I know," said Miss Conway absently; and for a few moments the two seemed to be pursuing their different trains of thought. Mr. Lauriston spoke first in a low voice.

"Suppose, now, the story I told you was true, I don't mean the apparition—that doesn't matter—but that lifelong dread and horror of hers; doesn't it seem strange that it should fade away to a faint uncertain shadow—oh, a human shadow, I grant you," for Miss Conway had made a quick gesture of dissent, "and we can't tell whether there is anything real behind it or not?"

"I should like to know that there was not," she said.

"Well, very likely there was not, and you have wasted your pity on a shadow. But it seems strange that we cannot be sure. Don't you feel that, more or less, with all old stories? Loves and hates which were

all fire, and madness, and blood, and nothing left but a little shadowy sentiment hovering about old houses."

Charley Eastwood glanced over his shoulder at his neighbours. In spite of his reading he had listened to their conversation. They were still talking about ghosts. Being an observant young man, he noted the fact that Rachel looked grave and preoccupied, and he hoped that she had not got a headache. As he pushed his paper away, the heading to a paragraph caught his eye, and he stopped to read it.

"She thought the whole world was miserable, and it was only she herself who was changed," said the girl.

"True; but you are taking this grandmother of mine much too seriously, Miss Conway. I could almost fancy that you had been in the yew walk, and seen her with your own eyes."

She looked at him. "Do you tell everybody about her, Mr. Lauriston?"

He shook his head, meeting her look with a smile. "There, that will do," he said, after a pause. "Shall we have some music, and drive the ghost away? I haven't forgot your flattering speech to me last night, but I'm not quite sure that I can play the part of David. I shouldn't look the character, should I?" said Mr. Lauriston with a laugh. "'Ruddy and of a fair countenance'—Eastwood is our man. We'll make him begin, and my turn shall come afterwards."

And two minutes later Charley was singing, and Mr. Brand had come softly across the room with a couple of photographs, to ask Miss Conway if she had ever seen Furness Abbey.

When Mr. Lauriston had said goodbye to his guests that evening he came back to the drawing-room. Standing on the hearthrug he surveyed the photographs strewn over the table, the piano with its scattered sheets of music, the chairs that stood about with a queer meaning in their disarray. There was the group that suggested the Eastwoods worshipping the curate; that other, somewhat apart, which brought back Charley, a little bored, perhaps, and conscious that he had got through an unusual amount of reading; and here was one with something in its position that instantly recalled the fluent ease with which Mr. Brand discoursed of Furness Abbey. Mr. Lauriston, softly whistling to himself, stepped forward, and picked up the feather fan which lay where Rachel Conway had left it.

The tune grew fainter and died. He looked round the room. "So—it is too big, and dreary, and full of shadows. Well, perhaps it is. I suppose Eastwood will take a neat little suburban villa somewhere, and they will have the curtains drawn, and the gas lighted, when he comes home from the office. And Mrs. Charles Eastwood will do her best to think of nothing outside that little house, and Charley will criticise her dress, and her manners, whenever he feels inclined, and the girls will go and stay there, and old Mrs. Eastwood will give her good advice about the servants and the furniture. Ah! by the way, the little

drawing-room will be full of hideous wedding presents. And sometimes they will have a few friends to dinner, or some musical fellow clerk of Charley's, who sings comic songs, will drop in. And she thinks she can live that life and be happy! Is the girl mad? And what will be the end of it?"

He stood for a moment, pursuing the thought which seemed to grow more distasteful as he viewed it more clearly. Then he threw down the fan. "Charles Eastwood's wife! Well, it's no business of mine, but I wish to heaven I had never seen her."

CHAPTER IV.

AN AFTERNOON IN REDLANDS PARK.

*"La mélancolie,
Cette fleur du Nord et d'un ciel souffrant,
Dont le froid calice, inondé de pluie,
S'exhale en poison."*

RACHEL came down on Friday morning in a dreamy mood, which found no satisfactory response from the faces round her. Charley had a faint perception of a far-away look in her eyes, and he called attention to the fact, causing Fanny to suggest that she was thinking of Mr. Lauriston. Miss Conway met this remark with a lofty silence, which might be taken as jest or earnest. In point of fact she was very much displeased. And yet she was thinking of Mr. Lauriston.

It had been almost a relief to her to come away from Redlands Hall the night before. The great lonely house had cast a shadow over her, Mr. Lauriston had perplexed her, and the thought of his young wife, so early lost, had saddened her through its very vagueness. The woman in his story, with her vain remorse, had pressed too closely on Rachel's excited imagination. It seemed as if, after long years of silence, finding some one who could understand her pain, she had poured a share of her guilty anguish into a pure soul. Rachel had been glad to watch Effie's pretty little head nodding sleepily in the dim light as they drove home, and Charley's pleasant cheery voice had been a welcome sound. The clasp of his strong hand as he said goodnight had been effectual to banish the lingering pressure with which Mr. Lauriston bade her farewell, wondering, with a curious expression in his eyes, how and when they would meet again. That touch had been with her all the way, till Charley held her hand, and told her that she looked tired, and must sleep well.

But things were altered with the morning. She had slept, and the visionary fancies of the night before were too hopelessly worsted by the daylight to be any longer formidable. Indeed, they were slipping away so fast that Rachel found herself regretting them, and would willingly

have called them back, and given them a little shelter. But where? The aggressive daylight filled every corner of the Eastwoods' house. If it had even been sunshine it would have brought its shadows with it; but the sky was cloudy, and the pale diffused light shed a common-place clearness over all the world.

And Mr. Lauriston? Rachel could not help wondering what effect the daylight would have on him. If she could see him that morning, would he seem different, like everything else? She tried to imagine him taking his ticket, and starting off to town, as anybody might do, and in the effort she realised that he was gone, and that life seemed smaller, and speech more contracted, in his absence.

"I suppose he will drive past here," said Mrs. Eastwood, breaking strangely into the girl's thoughts.

"Lauriston? Oh, he's gone before now," Charley replied, looking up from his paper. "He always drives to the station by Raymond's End."

Miss Conway turned away her eyes indifferently. "Surely that is further than the other way, isn't it?" said his mother.

"A little, perhaps. But there isn't a quarter of a mile's difference between them, and it's a better road, you know—not so much up and down. Still I dare say he'd have come this way if he'd known you wished it."

"Well, it wouldn't really have been any good, but I must own I should have liked just a glimpse of the child," said Mrs. Eastwood.

"The child!" Charley burst out laughing. "What on earth did you want to see the child for? Just like other babies, I suppose, especially driving by at the pace Lauriston's horses mostly go."

"Well, I said it wouldn't be any good. Still—you didn't see him at all, did you?"

"No—only heard him howl, as I told you. The little beggar has tolerable lungs, I should say, if that interests you."

"I cannot think how he can send him to those two old maids," said Mrs. Eastwood, whose surprise could bear several such repetitions before losing the keenness of its edge. "I cannot understand it!"

"Well, it's his own look-out. And I see no particular objection so long as he doesn't want to send me. Is Effie getting ready for this precious Brookfield expedition of ours, does anybody know?"

Rachel was sorry when Charley and Effie drove off, Effie waving her a bright farewell, and Charley looking back with an easy disregard of the old horse from the "Falcon." His carelessness mattered the less, as that sagacious animal was accustomed to a variety of incapable drivers. And though it did young Eastwood some injustice—not understanding the peculiar circumstances of the case—it turned safely into the Brookfield road, which was the important thing, and started off at what it considered a suitable pace. "I do hope Charley will be careful," said Mrs. Eastwood, as she and Rachel went back into the house.

Fanny was happy in the prospect of a morning's dressmaking. She

had cleared the table in readiness for cutting out, and she was impatiently waiting, with a fashion-book in her hand, to consult Rachel about the pattern of a trimming. Rachel tried to throw herself heart and soul into the work, and she partly succeeded. But even while she considered what style was best adapted for Fanny's neat, plump figure, and quite agreed with Mrs. Eastwood that the material was very pretty, and likely to wear well, and not expensive—no, not at all expensive—she was conscious of an underlying life of fancy in her brain. The world was full of wonders, and splendours, and shadows—was it not? At least it had seemed so the night before—full of doubts and fears, of dreams high as heaven and deep as hell. And meanwhile she measured and pinned. "You will get it out of that, I am sure, and then it will come all right for cutting on the cross; of course those folds must be cut on the cross," she said to Fanny, who stood by with a great pair of scissors, eager to begin. The work progressed rapidly, yet they were surprised when one o'clock came and found them absorbed in it. However, as Fanny remarked, the cutting out was just finished, and she could do up some of the seams that afternoon in the machine. She made up her mind on a question of buttons, between the meat and pudding at their early dinner, but hesitated about fringe till the cloth was taken away. Miss Conway never failed to show an intelligent interest in these matters, though it occurred to her once to wonder what Mr. Lauriston's great-great-grandmother did when she wanted a new gown. "I suppose she chose the colour she liked best, in spite of her misery," the girl thought to herself, "and settled what buttons she would have—like Fanny!"

"You look pale," said Mrs. Eastwood; "you mustn't stay indoors all day. I don't suppose Fanny will leave her work"—Fanny shook her head—"but you might walk into the village with me, and while I call on Mrs. Wilkinson you could go a little way by yourself."

Rachel readily assented. She was glad to be in the open air, though they talked of Fanny's dress till they reached Mrs. Wilkinson's door. But she rejoiced still more when she found herself alone and free, walking with swift steps, she hardly heeded where. It was one of those spring days when the damp soft air is like the breath of a hothouse, smelling of earth and leaves. Every bud was opening, all life quickening, under the low, grey sky. It was so sunless and still that it would have been melancholy, if the year had not been so young, and it seemed to Rachel, as she walked, as if the birds were singing through a strange and silent dream. She let her fancy wander where it would; she was content to listen to the ever flowing stream of song, yet not even that with too much earnestness, lest a thought should break the spell. She liked to be alone, going her way between the white-blossomed hedges, with her head high, as if the often trodden country lane were a pathway leading into an unknown world.

Other steps, as light and quick as if they were echoes of her own, were drawing near. Miss Conway turned a corner of the road, came

suddenly upon a small gate leading into the park, and found herself face to face with Mr. Lauriston.

There was the briefest possible pause of surprise before he spoke. "Alone, Miss Conway?" He unfastened the gate, and came forward, holding out his hand. "What, did I startle you?"

"I thought you had gone away," she answered.

"*L'homme propose*," said Mr. Lauriston, with that slight shrug of his shoulders which was already so familiar to Rachel, "but, to finish in plain English, my sister has fallen downstairs, and is too much shaken to be able to travel to-day."

"Is she much hurt?" inquired Rachel, still confused, but prompted by an instinct of politeness.

"Only shaken; nothing serious, I think, as she hopes to meet me in town to-morrow. But when I had the telegram I decided to wait here, rather than there. And now it is your own turn to account for yourself; how come you to be wandering about alone?" said Mr. Lauriston, with a quick glance, as if he half expected to see some one else turn the corner. "Where are the rest?"

"Effie and Mr. Eastwood are gone to Brookfield for the day, Fanny is busy, and Fido is asleep. So I went into the village with Mrs. Eastwood, and left her to pay some calls, while I came a little way by myself."

"I see. And where are you going?"

"Going? Oh, nowhere."

Mr. Lauriston swung the little gate back on its hinges, and leaned against it. "You will find this the most direct route, Miss Conway."

Rachel laughed doubtfully, and looked along the lane. He followed the direction of her eyes.

"In less than three minutes that way will take you into the Bucks-mill Hill road, which, as you know, is nothing remarkable, at any rate till you get to the farm. Besides, you have been there already. Come where you have not been."

She smiled again, and this time she looked towards the park. In the grey canopy of cloud there was a spot of luminous mist, and the only gleam of sunshine which that Friday afternoon was destined to know stole softly over the face of the land, and brightened it with a yellow glow. It was like an answering smile to Rachel.

"Well?" said Mr. Lauriston, still leaning on the gate. Something of easy grace in his attitude caught the girl's eye, as he stood in the foreground of the picture, waiting her decision. "It is evident to me," he said, "that 'the good fates please' that you should be introduced to my domain in spite of your indifference, or why did they bring us together exactly at the gate? Come, Miss Conway," he went on, with a sudden change of tone; "come and see the irregular swells!"

The pathetic entreaty triumphed, though even then she paused.

"Promise me that you won't take me to that yew walk, Mr. Lauriston."

"No, no, I won't," he promised, as he held the gate for her to pass.

"Nor the pond," she said, stopping short.

"Nor the pond. And the pond and the yew walk shall be taken as including everything else of the same kind, though I don't think there is anything else? Will that do?"

"Yes," said Miss Conway gravely, "that will do. But weren't you going anywhere, Mr. Lauriston?"

"Nowhere. Our destination is precisely the same, you perceive."

Towards that destination they walked together through the warm stillness of the afternoon, from which the soft glow had not yet quite faded. Rachel found it hard to believe that it was scarcely more than half an hour since she left the hot little house which was full of the busy noise of Fanny's machine, and the smell of early dinner. In the first surprise of her meeting with Mr. Lauriston she had forgotten all about the birds; but now they were singing afresh, and filling all the pauses in her thoughts with gushes of music. There were leafy whispers overhead as they went across "shady levels, mossy fine." Between the trunks there were glimpses of the tranquil reaches of the river, and beyond that were slopes and lawns of greenest grass among the oaks and beeches. Miss Conway felt as if Fanny, working at her seam, must be miles and miles away; or rather, perhaps, some strange distance which could not be expressed in miles. And yet through it all, with a half smile, half sigh, she was conscious that she herself should go home to a meat tea.

"Why did you smile?" said Mr. Lauriston. "What were you thinking of?"

"Nothing," she answered. How could she tell him that she was thinking about her tea—why, he would suppose she was hungry!—or about Fanny's new dress? Besides, she was not really thinking of these things, and she hardly knew what made her smile.

"You are going nowhere, and thinking of nothing by the way. Well, it is exceedingly appropriate, but you seem to be in rather a negative mood this afternoon, Miss Conway."

"I don't quite know what I was thinking of," she said. "But I fancy I must have been thinking how beautiful all this is—how could one think of anything else here?"

"Oh, I am silenced," said Mr. Lauriston with a well pleased smile, and they went some little distance before he spoke again. "Come this way, and I will show you something that you will like."

She followed obediently as he led the way up a little knoll close by. "Mr. Lauriston," she said, and he turned round quickly, "is this an irregular swell?"

"Unquestionably," he replied, with extreme gravity. "Though it is rather a small specimen, there is no doubt whatever about it."

"Well, it isn't very big, certainly, but it is very nice. And what am I to see now that I am here?"

"Do you know what that is?" Mr. Lauriston inquired. She looked where he pointed, and in the distance she saw the rounded top of Bucksmill Hill against the soft grey sky. She could distinguish the roof of the farm at its foot, among the clustered orchard trees, and, looking upward for the track which they followed that night, she caught sight of a bit of it, like a scar on the hillside, just below the spot where it branched off to the purple moorland. "You would see it better if the sun were shining," said Mr. Lauriston.

"It is very pretty now." And Rachel paused, with parted lips and eager eyes, looking at it. Only three days earlier she had stood on that hill, and looked at Redlands Hall, where it lay far off in its moonlit woodland. She remembered how they had talked of Mr. Lauriston, "a little dark man with bright eyes," and how her fancy had called up a shadow to haunt the shadowy moor. And now they stood together looking at Bucksmill Hill. Charley's words came back to her so clearly that it seemed as if they had that minute been spoken, and, turning to her companion, she said with a smile, "And all that belongs to you, Mr. Lauriston!"

"Yes," he said. "It belongs to me, or—sometimes I think it is the other way, and that I belong to it."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, it seems rather absurd to talk about owning all that, when there is so little I can do with it. In what sense do I really possess the earth that is under our feet? I could cut down some trees if I liked, and leave my mark so, but even that wouldn't last for ever. And when I'm underground there'll be the grass growing, and the river flowing, and Bucksmill Hill up aloft against the sky, just the same."

"That's true," said the girl.

"And meanwhile here I am, tied to the place after a fashion."

"But you like it?"

"Oh, yes, I like it," he said with a laugh. "I'm not complaining, Miss Conway. I was only trying to make out whether I own Redlands, or Redlands owns me."

"You could sell it, I suppose?"

"I have the legal power to do so—it isn't entailed—did you mean that? But I couldn't do it. There are tenants who have held under us for many years; all the old people in the village know us. I'm not a model landlord by any means. In fact, I'm simply King Log. But, such as I am, these good folks understand me, and we get on very well. Suppose I sold the place to a cotton spinner. He might take to improving them—I don't see how I could stipulate that he shouldn't improve them—and they wouldn't like it at all. And I have an idea that I should feel as if I had deserted my post."

"I think you would. I'm afraid there's no help for it, Mr. Lauriston."

"No, I must stick to the old place till I die. Till I die," he repeated with a whimsical smile, and faced round abruptly, with his back to Bucksmill Hill. "Look there, Miss Conway; do you see that glimpse of road across there, through the trees?"

She turned and looked. "Yes; I see it."

"Well, that's the straight road to the village. That's the way my funeral will go, one of these days. Now do you understand what I mean when I say I feel as if I belonged to the estate? *You* don't know where you will be buried." He stood with his bright eyes fixed upon the bit of road, as if he saw the slowly moving blots upon its whiteness. Rachel looked too, and suddenly remembered that the last funeral procession was little more than a year before, when his wife was buried. The thought startled her, and she wondered whether he was thinking of the same thing. It seemed to her—though what did she know about him?—that it was impossible to imagine Mr. Lauriston grieving in a commonplace, customary way. She could fancy a strange intensity of sorrow on his part, or a cool indifference—anything but the honest yet not all-absorbing griefs, which are woven like black threads into ordinary lives. Miss Conway might be foolish in this fancy of hers. She was only two and twenty, a dreamer of dreams, and Mr. Lauriston was the first man she had known who looked like the possible hero of a story, for her imagination could hardly glorify Charley Eastwood to that extent. At any rate she had this fancy; and since she was thinking of a beautiful young wife, won and lost within a year, did it not follow that her companion was hiding a lifelong sorrow?

He had turned and was looking at her. "Don't you like people to talk about dying and being buried, Miss Conway? You look grave, as you looked last night when you took my ghost so seriously."

"Oh, I don't think I mind," she said, as they resumed their walk. "Everybody must die; it would be silly to be afraid to talk of that. But I'm not like you, Mr. Lauriston; I don't like talking about horrors."

"Do I talk about horrors?"

"I think you do, don't you?"

"That depends partly on your definition of horrors, perhaps."

"Well, crimes," she said. "Or—or dreadful sufferings, or"—she stopped short, glanced at him, and, as he did not speak, she made another attempt. "I think you want to know about people who are strange in any way. I think you want to study them and understand how they feel. Oh, I can't tell you exactly what I mean!"

"But that will do; I know what you mean," said Mr. Lauriston. "Well, such things are in the world—misshapen lives, and all manner of queer growths—one must look at them, surely. But I have no morbid taste for them, I hope; I don't think I particularly want to talk about

them. Certainly I don't want to talk about them to you, Miss Conway," he said, with one of his swift smiles.

"But why do you like to think about such things at all?—things that cannot be mended, I mean; it is terrible to think about them. Why do you want to look at them, Mr. Lauriston?"

"I won't retort that it is difficult to say what can or can't be mended," he replied, "because I don't profess to do anything in that line. I simply take things as I find them, one with another. What do you want me to do? Go through the world with my eyes shut, and swear that it is Eden?"

"It might be like Eden, perhaps, if one only looked at what was good and beautiful," said the girl. "Dying doesn't matter so much. But if one thinks of dreadful things, they come back over and over again——"

She was looking at the ground as she walked, and Mr. Lauriston had time for a quick curious glance at her face, before she raised her eyes. He saw that her lip trembled.

"This is only a better version of your desire to be commonplace," he said, and was apparently interested in a distant group of trees. "Of course, as you say, innocence can make an Eden of its own, let the world be what it may."

"Well, then, isn't that the best?"

"If you like," said Mr. Lauriston. "It is very beautiful, no doubt. But give me my choice, and I should like to see this queer world of ours just as it really is, if that were possible—shadows, blood-stains, smouldering fires, and all the rest of it, as well as the beauty. Innocence such as you talk of—pardon me—is something like jaundice; you see the universe your own colour, only of course it is white instead of yellow. It is far better than a preference for horrors; but I should like the truth best, if such a vision could be!"

He had apparently given her time to recover something of the self-possession which she had so unaccountably lost, for she smiled as she answered, "I didn't know you were so prejudiced against innocence, Mr. Lauriston. Well, it is easily got rid of, isn't it?"

He arched his brows. "Do you really think that, Miss Conway? Did your favourite preacher tell you so, and did you believe him? But that is a mistake. The beautiful trustfulness, which sees Eden in this everyday world, clings to some characters. I knew a man once"—Mr. Lauriston looked straight before him, with a half smile, as if he called up the face of his friend—"who thought himself just a little embittered by his knowledge. He fell in love, and made up his mind that happiness might fairly be hoped for in an alliance between a little too much keen-sightedness and the softest and most confiding innocence. What should you say?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Did he try it?"

"Oh, yes; he tried it."

"Well, what happened?" said Rachel, as if she were compelled to ask the question.

"Why, it turned out rather unexpectedly. He found that he had mistaken the parts, and had been playing the wrong one all the time."

"Well, even then I think your friend had the best of it," Miss Conway began defiantly; but a look at Mr. Lauriston's face disconcerted her. "I believe you invented that man," she said. "You are laughing."

"Not at you, then."

They walked a little further. Rachel, distrustfully silent, gazed at the dull sky, while Mr. Lauriston was still half smiling at his jest. He was the first to speak. "Ghost stories are not included among the horrors, really, I hope! My great-great-grandmother didn't haunt you last night, did she?"

"I'm afraid she did, a little," said Rachel, with a quick glance. "But I don't think the ghost had very much to do with it."

"No, of course not. One can't well be frightened by the spectres of past ages. There is a fashion in terrors as in everything else. A man who has an encounter with the devil doesn't do now; the brimstone-burning red-hot style of thing has gone by. It wanted twilight, like snapdragon."

"Yes," she said, in a low voice, "but how dreadful it is to think of the people who lived and died in the twilight, and believed all that! It is easy for you to laugh at their fancies."

"And for you, too, I hope?"

"Yes, here and now. But suppose one were to be alone, and to believe something hideous and dreadful! If I did, it would be true for me then, you know."

Mr. Lauriston was touched by the little cloud of sadness on Miss Conway's pure face, the faint, passing shadow cast by darker ages. "No doubt," he said. "But I don't see how that is to be, unless one went mad."

"Well?" said the girl breathlessly, and looked straight into his eyes.

He felt a cold shock as he met that look with its sudden revelation of fear. There was a moment of startled silence, and she turned her face away. "So that is the bugbear," he said after a pause. "And why, Miss Conway?"

"I don't know," she said, trying to make her tone indifferent. "There isn't any real reason. I suppose everybody has fancies."

"But tell me why," he said, and there was something different in his voice. "Stay, you will be tired; why shouldn't you rest a little while? Sit down here."

They were close to some felled trees, and Rachel obeyed without a word. He chose his place somewhat lower, and rested his elbow on the tree she sat on. Again she heard the birds singing through the grey stillness. The whole afternoon seemed like a dream, and Mr. Lauriston—

who was studiously looking down, and lightly touching a daisy with his foot—was more dream-like than anything else. He had drawn off his glove, and she gazed absently at the white hand with the black signet ring on it, which lay on the rough bark.

"Now tell me about this fancy of yours," he said. It was neither an entreaty which left the decision to her, nor a command which might arouse defiance, but something between the two. And why should she not tell him? It was nothing—how often she had told herself it was nothing, in the loneliest hours of the night! He might laugh—but if he did, would not that laugh help her? Could she not despise her terror, remembering his scorn? Or if—in the very folly of her fears he saw their meaning plainly written, what then? Had she not seen it many a time before? Why should she not tell him? She could not have told Effie, or Mrs. Eastwood, or Charley, but Mr. Lauriston would understand. This was but the third time she had seen him; a week earlier he had been only the merest name to her, and yet she was sure he would understand. Besides, he was going away. She would not have told him if he had stayed on at Redlands; but he was going, and she herself would leave on Monday, and the Eastwoods were only to remain a few days longer. Perhaps she would never see Mr. Lauriston again.

"There isn't anything to tell, really," she said in a tremulous voice. "You will say that I am silly; that will be the kindest thing that you can say. It was only something that frightened me when I was a little child."

"And frightens you still because it frightened you then," he said, looking up at her very kindly. "We leave most of our childish terrors behind us as we grow up, but now and then we find one which grows up with us. Well, Miss Conway?"

She clasped and unclasped her restless hands as she sat. "I wasn't more than ten years old," she said suddenly. "It was before mamma died, and before my father died, too; but he was ill, and away from home, and mamma and I were alone. It was one day in the spring—something like this—and she told me she was going for a drive to see a lady who was ill, and she would take me with her. I don't know where the place was. It was a long way, and I remember crossing a little bridge, and then turning the corner and seeing the house—a grey house with some fir-trees growing on a little hill by it, and a steep drive up to the door. I feel as if I could see it now," said Miss Conway. "There were some straggling laurels, and I remember two vases with the last year's dead geraniums in them. We went into a room where there were three ladies. One was quite old, and I think she was nearly blind, for I know they had to explain to her that I was there. She told them to give me some cake, and that would help to pass the time; and then my mother said we could not stay long, and might she see Miss Agatha?"

"I didn't understand that I was meant to stay with the blind lady, and eat my cake. I always went everywhere with mamma, so I

followed her when she went out with the others, and nobody took any notice. It was an old-fashioned dark passage, and I was small, so as soon as they opened a door I squeezed in amongst them, and stood just inside the room.

"There was a window at the further end, a great desolate-looking grey window, and a lady was standing by it. I fancy she must have been between fifty and sixty. She was very tall, I know. When she heard the door open, she came towards us, waving her hand to us to stay where we were, while she swept a great courtesy in the middle of the room, and then came a step or two further and courtesied again, and all the time she kept her eyes fixed on me. I don't know what the others said or did, I only heard the rustling of her grey silk dress. I couldn't move, she frightened me so with her great staring eyes. It wasn't that she was ugly—I think she must have been handsome once—but it was a dreadful face; one was forced to watch it, one didn't know what she would do next, it was like a nightmare. She took no notice of mamma; she just nodded and said, 'I'm welcoming my new visitor; she shall come and stay with me—she shall come and stay with me.' Of course it was only a moment, really; and then a woman at a work-table, who stood up when we went in, stepped forward, and said, 'It's little miss she means, ma'am;' and my mother looked round and saw me standing there. She ran and caught me, and took me into the passage, and held me in her arms, and said I mustn't be frightened, that the lady didn't mean any harm, but she never intended me to go in to see her. I heard Miss Agatha calling after me as we went back to the other room. I waited there with the blind lady till mamma was ready to go. She was crying when she came, and she cried in the carriage as we drove away. And I remember looking back just before we crossed the little bridge, and seeing the old house on the hill, and the fir-trees all black and twisted against the clouds, and feeling as if there must be something wicked about the place."

"You poor little frightened child!" said Mr. Lauriston softly. "And what more did you learn about Miss Agatha?"

"Only that my mother used to stay with her when she was a girl. Miss Agatha and her sisters were no relations of hers, but they lived in the same place, and were rich people. I know I thought that those were the sisters I had seen; but she said, 'No, only Miss Agatha lived with them; their brother was a doctor.' She would not tell me much, and she did not know how frightened I was, nor how I used to dream at night."

Miss Conway stopped all at once. "It *does* sound childish," she said. "Are you laughing at me, Mr. Lauriston? I don't think I knew how silly it would seem. But yet, indeed, there hasn't been one day since that day that I haven't thought of that madwoman. And I don't care if you *are* laughing," she said desperately, while the hot colour flushed her face; "I am going to finish since I've begun."

"I'm not laughing," Mr. Lauriston replied.

"And there isn't much more to say, luckily. Only it was just then that my father died. He was away and mamma went to him. She had never been very strong—she was tiny and slight, with dark eyes—not like me, I'm like papa—and she caught a cold, and that was the beginning of the end. She was dead too before I was twelve. I will tell you what is dreadful, Mr. Lauriston, even if you *do* laugh. If you are alone in a big school, and would give all the world to dream of your mother at night, and yet you would keep awake if you could, because you know you will dream of something else. It is perfectly silly, I know, but it is dreadful all the same."

"Poor child, how you must have suffered! But now—surely not now?"

"Not now," Miss Conway repeated. "But, Mr. Lauriston, why is it that even now it haunts me, only in a different way? I feel as if that madwoman had somehow laid hands on my life, and, though I fight for it, it is all spoiled and ruined in the struggle. Why am I so frightened if people only mention the word 'madness?' If anybody points out a building, and says it is a lunatic asylum, the blood runs cold in my veins. Suppose one went mad and were shut up in one of those awful places"—Miss Conway made a gallant attempt to smile—"shut up with people who came courtesying to one, and had staring eyes! I know all this is folly, but that is just what frightens me most of all. Why should such a little thing take possession of me like this? Would it if I were like other people?" She turned her appealing eyes to Mr. Lauriston. "You laughed at me last night when I said I wanted to be commonplace, but if I could only be sure that I should live and die like the millions of happy commonplace folks—if I could be quite sure——"

"You would have a security that not one man, woman, or child of all those millions possesses," he replied. "You would be the one standing apart from all our common fears and perils. All that you have told me is natural enough—a most unlucky chance, but nothing more. This mad friend of your mother's saw you and forgot you within the day; you were no more to her than she really was to you; but, being a child with a powerful imagination, you were haunted by her meaningless looks and words. And then your mother's death left you alone with your terror."

"But now," said Rachel, "now that I know all this?"

"Well," Mr. Lauriston replied, "what is unnatural now? Your thoughts have been fixed on this one dark subject, till madness has assumed too prominent a position in your vision of the world. People who make it their study generally do so with some hope of alleviating its misery. That gives a healthful interest; but you know nothing of it, you have not studied it, you have only brooded over your childish fancy."

"Are you blaming me?" she asked doubtfully.

"Blaming you, no! You could not help it. I am merely trying to put the matter in the right light, to show you that there is nothing awful and exceptional about it. I want you to see that the cause of your trouble is simple enough." He stopped abruptly. "Good heavens! what can I say? I believe that I am talking the most excellent sense, and yet how atrociously cold it all sounds!"

"You are very kind," she said, looking down. "I don't think you are cold."

"Thank you. No, I hope I am not. And, really, I am saying the best I have to say. If it is any good to tell you that I am very sorry, and that I would help you if I could, I can give you that assurance. But I have no stock of universally consoling maxims to offer you, Miss Conway. I don't deal in them. It matters the less, as I have no doubt that some one has already suggested the usual style of comfort."

"But I have never told any one else," she said.

"Never told any one else—do you mean that literally? Never when you were a child? Never since then?"

"Never," she repeated. "I was afraid. I thought people wouldn't understand. I never said anything from that day to this."

"You told no one through all these years?" said Mr. Lauriston, half to himself. "And now you have told me!"

Simple as the words were, they gave a new significance to Rachel's confession. She felt a weight of meaning in them, and drew back, colouring afresh as she met his eyes. This secret of hers might be the merest folly, a trifle, an absurdity; but she had guarded it from her childhood, she had spoken no syllable of it to those who knew her best, and she had told it unreservedly to this chance acquaintance of three days. The passing touch of his surprise awoke her own. Why had she done it? She was not even sure that she liked Mr. Lauriston—at that moment she was half inclined to believe that she hated him. And what would he think of her?

It was true that he was surprised, but he was not, as Rachel imagined, reckoning the hours of their acquaintance. That she should have spoken after three days was no more in his eyes than if she had spoken after three weeks, or three months, but that she had told her secret suffering to him alone out of all the world was an all-important fact. What did she think of him that she had done it?

"I don't know why I told you," she said, as she drew back, with a quick glance of distrust and defiance, a sign of the inevitable reaction after the strong impulse of confidence. "It was too bad to bore you with that silly story."

"I hope you told me because you felt you might trust me. You did not bore me."

"Trust you with my nightmare fancies?" said the girl, trying to laugh. "Well, perhaps. At any rate I think I knew you would

understand. Some people wouldn't, you know, even if they were my best friends."

"The Eastwoods, for instance?" Mr. Lauriston suggested. "I don't know much about the girls. Charley is a good fellow; but, possibly, if I had a fanciful secret——"

"Tell *him*! No, I couldn't," said Rachel. "He always seems so bright, and all his life so frank and open. Why, I hardly think of such things when he is by."

"So," said Mr. Lauriston to himself, "that is the charm;" and aloud he answered, "And, though you have told me, it seems to me that I have said nothing, and done nothing. What *can* I do, Miss Conway?"

"You can't do anything," she said, "except tell me the truth. Do you think me—mad to be frightened as I am?"

"No, I don't. Did I not tell you that before?"

She leaned towards him, pleading with earnest eyes, and half reaching out a timid hand. "Do tell me the truth, Mr. Lauriston."

"I don't think anything of the kind, upon my honour I don't," he repeated. "Anybody might be frightened. I'm speaking the simple truth—you believe me?"

"Yes," she said. "Thank you. I am very glad." There was a pause during which she looked far away into the green dimness of the wooded landscape. Mr. Lauriston felt as if that spot would be haunted for ever by the pale, beautiful shadow of a girl, questioning the distance with an anxious gaze. The little interval of silence seemed curiously long to him, and it was a relief when a shiver in the branches overhead broke the spell, and she looked at the sullen sky and stood up.

"Miss Conway," he said as he rose, "you must try not to think of all this."

She smiled. "Do you know, I was wishing, as I sat there, that I had never said a word about it. You can't think how vividly it has all come back to me. It might be yesterday—or to-day."

"But that will pass off," he urged in his gentle voice. "And then do you not think that you will like to remember that you have a friend who tells you that all this fear is nothing—that there is no foundation for it? For we shall be friends, shall we not?"

"If you like," she said absently, but after a moment she recollected herself. "I beg your pardon, Mr. Lauriston, I didn't mean to be ungrateful; you have been very good to me. Yes, let us be friends, please. It is quite true, I *shall* like to think that there is some one who knows about my stupid fancies; it will help me. It was silly of me to say I was sorry I had talked about it; if it does make me realise it more just to-day, what does it matter?" She stood, drawing a long blade of grass through her fingers. "It isn't as if we were likely to meet often," she added softly.

Even if she had been looking at Mr. Lauriston she might hardly have

understood the flash of expression which crossed his face. As it was, she was utterly unconscious of it.

"No, I suppose we shan't meet often," he replied. "And perhaps it is just as well, if you are always going to see me in your mind's eye side by side with the madwoman."

"Oh, no, no! I only meant that of course I should remember that you knew. I must remember that."

"Naturally," he said with a smile. "Of course you must. So all I can do for you is to stand out of the sunshine? It doesn't sound like asking very much of me, and yet I'm tempted to ask for something in return."

"What is that?"

"Well, in common fairness that something mustn't be very much either, must it? Don't look round as if you were thinking of turning back."

"But I must go back now, Mr. Lauriston."

"No; come a little further through a bit of the garden, and you shall go out another way, nearer the village. There is my request," he said, still smiling.

"Is it far?"

"No, not far. Oh, no, you needn't look at the sky. It will not rain."

"I feel as if there might be thunder, don't you? But I shall like very much to come," she added politely.

Why did Mr. Lauriston wish to prolong their walk? Did he want his garden, as well as the park, haunted by that pale memory of Rachel Conway? Or was it only a whim? He did his best to amuse her, with anxious kindness in every word and look, and she did her best to be amused, but it was an effort. She felt as if she were in dreamland still, as if a melancholy change had passed over everything. It almost seemed as if, when she uttered her secret, the trees and flowers had heard it, and would whisper it mournfully one to another through all the world. The grey sadness of the afternoon was *her* sadness, the singing of the birds was strange and new, the very daisies in the grass looked up with eyes of deep significance. She was half frightened at her wandering fancies while she tried to talk to Mr. Lauriston. They pursued her when she passed into the old-fashioned garden, which had been the glory of an earlier Redlands Hall. Mr. Lauriston showed her where the old house once stood. She answered almost mechanically, and she looked round with a show of interest; but she walked in dreamland all the while, and felt oppressed and dull among the high clipped hedges and formal paths. Her companion's soft voice was saying in her ear, "I've no doubt that my great-grandfather would have done away with it all, but happily he was so busy laying out the grounds about his new house, that he never found time to modernise this."

"That was very lucky," she replied.

"Yes; for it is a quaint old place, isn't it? And my uncle cared so much for it, that nothing would have induced him to make the slightest change. Judging from a sketch we have, the old house was picturesquely suited to the garden, and I don't think he ever forgave its destruction."

"Well, it was a pity. Don't you think so?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Yes, it was a great pity. I'm only thankful that the present Hall is a tolerably comfortable place in which to deplore my ancestor's want of taste. It was a very great pity, of course, and I am exceedingly sorry. It is sad to think of such utter want of reverence for the memories that had gathered round the old home." After a moment's pause he added gravely, "I always feel that there is such scope for beautiful sentiment when a thing cannot possibly be altered."

Rachel answered only with a languid smile, glancing from Mr. Lauriston's face to the site of the old house, a bit of smooth sward, green and fresh as countless graves are green. She drew a long breath as they turned their backs on it, and went forward under the trees. It seemed to her that the low arch of sky dropped its curtain of cloud so heavily about the narrow landscape that all the air was dead. And, as she walked, she pictured to herself how the madwoman might suddenly turn the corner of one of those long avenues, and come towards her, sweeping stately courtesies, while Mr. Lauriston would vanish with a polite bow, and leave her alone with her terror. Of course she knew perfectly well that it was utter nonsense; but the scenery was so curiously suited to the visionary drama, that she felt as if she could actually see it, and it troubled her as an ill dream might have done.

"You are tired," said Mr. Lauriston, in a tone of self-reproach.

Any other voice would have startled her out of her fancies, but Mr. Lauriston's words came softly, with no discord, as if he belonged to her dream world. "No, I'm not tired; not really tired," she replied. And when he persisted, she answered, with a determination which he recognised as unchangeable, "No; she would walk home, he should not send her." As she spoke they turned into a wide path, and he crossed it quickly and went on. For a moment it occurred to her to wonder whether it could be the yew walk of which he had talked. The doubt lasted only for a moment, the place did not answer to his description, but her backward glance, as she followed him, gave her a glimpse of a nursemaid and child at the further end of the avenue.

Mr. Lauriston slackened his pace and was silent, and Rachel's heart smote her. He had been kind to her; had she spoken coldly? Even if she had not, she was conscious of a longing to escape from her companion and the dreary fancies which his talk had called up, and she felt the unspoken desire an ingratitude, for which she wanted to make amends. Instinct told her that to ask a favour, however trifling, would be the best way to please Mr. Lauriston. She looked round. "May I have

one or two of those lilies of the valley?" she said. "I like them so much."

He stooped to gather them, and she watched his fingers parting the broad leaves. "Shall you ever come to Redlands again, Miss Conway?" he asked, with a quick, upward glance.

"Ah, that is more than I can say. But I don't think it is very likely."

"No, I suppose not. And even if you did, you would not want to come here."

"Why not?" she said, looking down, as she took the flowers from his hand. "How sweet these lilies are!"

"You would not," he repeated. "I meant you to enjoy your walk this afternoon; or, perhaps," with a smile, "I meant to enjoy it."

"Well," said the girl, "I did enjoy it—at first. And if, afterwards—it was no fault of yours!"

"That may be," Mr. Lauriston replied. "I didn't say I was to blame. But you yourself allow that it did not end as it began. I am not surprised, for, judging from my own experience, Fate is generally ironical. As a rule I get what I want, and then I discover either that I didn't want it, or that it has slipped through my fingers. Have you found that?"

"I don't know," she said. She understood that he was thinking of his beautiful wife so quickly lost, of his son and heir a poor little cripple, of Redlands, perhaps, so full of memories of that year of happiness, and now almost a burden to him. She was touched by his half confidence, and looked timidly at him.

"And so I am sorry," he went on, "sorry that you are less happy than I fancied——"

"Oh, but I am very happy sometimes," she said. "I'm not always thinking about that."

"No, indeed, I should hope not. And I'm sorry, too, that you seem to regret having trusted me. You need not, Miss Conway. I suppose you haven't any brothers or sisters?" he said abruptly.

"I have nobody," Rachel answered, "not even a cousin. I live with a Miss Whitney, who was a friend of my mother's."

"Then do you think you could look upon me as a kind of elder brother?" said Mr. Lauriston, half smiling in his deliberate speech; "so that you might take it as a matter of course that I was very much at your service, if ever I could help you in any way? No, I see that won't do; you don't like the idea. Is it that you fancy that brothers are too apt to dictate to their sisters?"

Rachel blushed, perceiving that she had betrayed herself. It was true that the idea of Mr. Lauriston as a brother had struck her as absurdly impossible. She might not know what a girl's feelings towards a brother would be, but she was quite certain that they could not be the least like the curiosity, the fanciful wonder, the alternate attraction and

repulsion, trust and distrust, which she felt as she looked at Mr. Lauriston. And his soft-voiced politeness was not a brother's manner as she had imagined it. "I don't think I can fancy what it would be like to have a brother," she said doubtfully.

"Well, then, it shall be friendship, as you said a minute ago. Perhaps that will be best." They had left the garden, and were walking along the drive which crossed the park. As they passed a clump of trees the great gates, with the Lauriston crest upon them, came in sight, and Miss Conway paused. "Don't come all the way with me, please," she said. "I think I would rather go back alone."

He stopped at once. "You granted my request," he said, "so I must not complain. You won't have far to go when once you are in the road, Miss Conway. I hope you won't be tired."

"Mr. Lauriston," said Rachel, "you have been very kind to me, and it seems to me that I've been very ungrateful all the time."

"Not at all," he politely assured her; but there was an expression in his bright eyes which she did not quite understand.

"I'm very sorry," she said. "I'm afraid I was rather rude once. I think I said more than I meant to say. I don't quite know how to make you understand. I meant"—she hesitated, looking down at the lilies in her hand—"that is, I didn't mean——"

"I fancy I know what you meant," he said. "Surely I've made it clear that I haven't taken anything amiss."

"But it seems to me that I have done something amiss."

"No, indeed you have not. And for proof of it," he said, with a peculiar little laugh, "for proof that you have not, we are sworn friends, you know." Rachel glanced at him, fancying she detected something of mockery in his laugh; but the next moment he went on, and his voice took a fuller and deeper tone, "Do not apologise, Miss Conway, and never trouble yourself about anything you have said or done to me."

She held out her hand. "Goodbye," she said softly, "and thank you."

"Ah, don't thank me! It sounds so cruelly ironical, when I would have done something, and could do nothing. Goodbye."

But, as she turned away, he called after her, "Miss Conway," and rejoined her. "I think I'm old enough to claim the privilege of giving advice," he said. "Of course you have the privilege of taking no heed of it—that belongs to us all from our cradles. May I speak?"

"Yes," Rachel answered, looking at him in some surprise.

"You want to be commonplace," said Mr. Lauriston, "but you are not commonplace, and you can't be. Don't ruin your life in the attempt. You are so young, you have many years before you, take care what you are about. Half a century or so of weariness would be a terrible penalty to pay for a blunder. Pardon me for saying this, and once more good-bye."

His earnestness startled her. "Goodbye," she echoed, and went hurriedly towards the gate. "Half a century!" The words had caught

her attention and held it. They pursued her as she walked, and, brief as they were, they overwhelmed her with their volume of meaning. He could not know—could he know?—what need there was of his warning, how, in the terror of her loneliness, she longed to mix her life with lives narrower than her own, and to rest in their homely shelter. It would not be hard to speak a word on one of those spring days, just a word which would give an undefined future into Charley's kindly keeping. But half a century with Charley Eastwood! She went out into the road, burdened with the weight of those accumulated years. She questioned within herself whether it was fair to expect any one to live as long as that. Half a century! The mere thought of it was like putting life under a microscope; every little failing, every harmless habit, was exaggerated into something enormous, grotesque, oppressive. Why should not Charley go to sleep on Sunday afternoons if he liked? She knew he always did, and on the previous Sunday she had exchanged amused and stealthy glances with Effie, when, after letting his book slip downward to the floor, he laid his head on the end of the sofa, and slumbered peacefully with his mouth open. Miss Conway, a little listless herself, had felt no ill will towards the sleeping youth. But now she could not escape from a whimsical calculation of two thousand six hundred heavy Sundays, an unbroken vista of drowsy afternoons, at the end of which she saw Charley waking up, and stretching himself in his far-off old age, before he went down into his grave. And every nap, in that lifelong series, would mark a completed week of little thoughts and cares. It was terrible, and she felt her heart grow sick within her, even while she was fully conscious of the ridiculous aspect which Mr. Lauriston's half-century had assumed in her thoughts. The laughter which trembled on her lip did not mend the matter, for absurdities are often of all things most intolerable. How was she to live through all those Sunday afternoons, and what would she be at the end of them?

Coming to a curve in the road, she turned for a last look at Redlands Hall. Through the fanciful spirals and bars of the iron gates, she could see the long drive, the smooth green turf, the trees, in their heavy leafiness of early summer, massed round the great brick house, and the sullen sky above them all. As she looked, she had a momentary glimpse of Mr. Lauriston, crossing an open space. He passed behind a widely sweeping cedar, and, though she watched, wondering whether the slim far-off black figure would appear again, she watched in vain, for he was gone. "Sworn friends," he had said, and already it seemed to her that her friend was out of reach. It was true that only a few minutes earlier she had wished to escape from him; but nevertheless, as she lingered on the road, looking backward at that sunless picture, she felt lonely and deserted.

It was, however, too late to stand gazing, even if it had not been so utterly useless. Miss Conway looked at her watch, and set her face homeward, making a resolute effort to banish all thoughts of that after-

noon, and to fix her mind on the speedy return of Charley and Effie from their drive, and the prospect of a meat tea. She planned a brief and bald account of her walk with Mr. Lauriston, which she hoped would not offend anybody's sense of propriety, though she felt a little dubious about Mrs. Eastwood's view of the matter. "I suppose I shall have to tell her first," she thought. "Well, it can't be helped, and it's lucky it isn't Miss Whitney." So she walked bravely on, with curiously mingled feelings of guilt and innocence. She was quite certain that Mrs. Eastwood would strongly disapprove of such confidential talk between a young lady and a gentleman, especially when the confidences were all on the young lady's side; and, indeed, Rachel felt the colour rising to her cheeks again, as she remembered her own frankness. But below this guilty trouble lay the consciousness of utter guiltlessness.

There was a quick sound of pursuing wheels, a cry of "Rachel! Rachel!" in Effie's clear little voice, and Charley was pulling up, and calling to her to jump in. "Room—yes, lots!" was his answer to an attempted objection, "and I'm not going on without you—so there! Jump in at once. That's it—are you all right? If you haven't room enough it's Effie's fault; take it out of her. And what have you been doing with yourself, eh?" So before Rachel well knew what had happened, she was perched up between Charley and Effie, and they were rattling along the lane.

She answered their questions lightly and shortly, and found it easier to do than she had expected. "Then Lauriston has made you walk too far," said Charley. "He ought to have known better than to march you about like that."

"I'm not tired, really."

"Oh, no," said the young fellow, "not at all. Does he think he's the only man in the world with a park and gardens, that he's so awfully anxious to show them off? And he tired you last night, too. I wish I'd been there this afternoon; don't you think I'd have taken better care of you than that?"

Rachel laughed. Her fantastic terrors were vanishing at the cheery sound of Charley's voice, and she could almost believe that the skies were brightening round her as they drove. A touch of the whip quickened the leisurely old horse, and the evening air came freshly to her face. They jolted over a stone, Rachel swayed a little, and her shoulder came into momentary contact with Charley, while, on the other side, Effie's small, caressing hand stole under her arm. She felt safe in a little world of simple, everyday facts, and honest kindness. "And now tell me what you have been doing," she said.

"Rowing on the river," Effie promptly replied. "I've been rowing; Reggie Maxwell has been teaching me. Such fun; I wish you'd been with us."

"Here we are!" said Charley. "The old horse wanted to take us up that last turning to his stable, did you see?"

Fanny came running out of the leafy porch to meet them. "Oh, you've got Rachel!—we began to wonder—why, Effie, you've torn your dress, did you know? Have you had a pleasant day?"

Charley helped Rachel down, and answered Fanny's question in her ear as he did so. "I'd rather have been here," he said softly.

"Oh, a glorious day!" Effie exclaimed. "Only we kept thinking it was going to pour. I say, Fanny, Susie Maxwell has grown quite pretty, and Reggie is such a nice fellow, not a bit shy."

"By Jove, no, I should think he wasn't," said Charley.

"Well, he used to be very shy," Effie replied. "Did you say I'd torn my dress, Fanny? Where is it? Is it very bad?"

"Here—no, not so very bad. You can put a little bit in—you had some bits left, hadn't you? Oh, Effie, who do you think came to call this afternoon?"

"Who?" Effie asked, passing the hem of her dress between her fingers. "I daresay I caught it on one of those bushes by the river when I was getting into the boat. Who called, Fanny?"

"Mr. Brand. Mr. Brand came just as mother came back. He stayed ever so long."

"Mr. Brand!" Effie repeated, with a faint accent of regret in her voice. But in a moment she recovered herself. "And Fanny, I was going to tell you, Reggie Maxwell's hair isn't bad now at all. Only a nice red, you know, like what they put in pictures—isn't it, Charley?"

"Yes, just like what you'd put into a picture of a tomato," Charley replied. "Nice cheerful colour for a dull day."

"I daresay you think that's clever. I call it silly," said Effie. "Oh, here's mother! Mother, Mrs. Maxwell sent you her love, and there's some asparagus for you. Charley, where's that asparagus? I know it's somewhere; I saw Reggie put it in just before we started. Oh, you dear darling Fido, aren't you glad to see me again—aren't you, then? And was it a dear little doggie, and would it have liked to come to Brookfield, too, and didn't Rachel take it out for a nice little run—didn't she, then? Oh, a naughty Rachel, wasn't she, going for her walks with her Mr. Lauristons, and never thinking about a poor Fido, a poor old bow-wow!"

"He was asleep," said Miss Conway. She rejoiced to find that in the eager haste of question and reply, her own adventures seemed likely to be lightly passed over. Mrs. Eastwood, it is true, wondered several times how Miss Lauriston happened to fall downstairs, which Miss Lauriston it was who had fallen downstairs, and how many stairs she fell down; but being greatly interested in telling Rachel about an aunt of hers, who slipped from the top to the bottom of a flight of stone steps, and only took a bit of skin about the size of a three-penny piece off her elbow, it did not occur to her to ask many questions about the walk. Later in the evening, when tea was over, and Rachel had begun a game of bezique with Charley, Effie, who was looking over her friend's hand

and scoring for her, was suddenly struck with an idea. "What on earth did you talk about all this afternoon, you and Mr. Lauriston?" she asked.

"Oh, I don't know—all sorts of things. Aces, Effie. You think he isn't easy to talk to, but he has plenty to say, really."

"Oh, Lauriston can talk as fast as you please," said Eastwood. "Not much in my style, though; I suppose I'm not clever enough to appreciate him." He smiled good-humouredly, as if cleverness were an amiable weakness which he had happily escaped. "And if I'm not much mistaken he bored you last night, didn't he? You were curious about the Squire before you saw him—weren't you?—and I rather thought you two would get on; but I fancy you've had about enough of him if the truth were known, eh?" And Charley nodded, pleased at his own penetration.

"*Did he bore you?*" said Effie, sympathetically, as she marked sixty for queens. "The park is lovely; but I'm sure if I had to walk about there, *tête-à-tête* with Mr. Lauriston, I should soon have had enough of him, and wanted somebody else. That's a common marriage, isn't it?"

"Reggie Maxwell, for instance?" said Charley, and the discussion ended in a scuffle, which rather interfered with the bezique.

When Rachel went up to her room that night, there was a faint sweetness in the air, which puzzled her for a moment, till she remembered Mr. Lauriston's gift of lilies. She had put them in a glass of water on her table, and, as she paused before them, she recalled the spot where they grew, his quick hands seeking among the leaves, and the dark brightness of his eyes, as he rose and gave them to her. It was commonplace enough; and yet she fancied that the flowers were like those which blossom here and there in old legends, gathered hastily in some borderland of strange visions, and brought back to fade in the light of common day, and she turned away, feeling as if their perfume were the subtle essence of her melancholy. Outside, the rain was falling in heavy drops. She opened the window, and instantly the dreary pattering upon the roof became a rushing wave of sound, and a breath of pleasant coolness. One might have fancied whispers of unknown meaning abroad in the night, mixed with a multitude of softly falling footsteps. Rachel gazed out into the darkness. Close at hand she could see the glimmer of her candle on the wet sill, and the shining leaves of ivy and wistaria. She could partly make out the dark mass of the great elm-tree which overshadowed the house, and further off she knew were lights in the village windows. Beyond those, gaze as she would, she saw nothing, but she leaned and looked till she seemed to understand the message of the rain. It told her of the drops that were falling on the whispering leaves in Redlands Park, soaking the heather on the dusky moor, feeding the scarcely formed fruit in Mrs. Pattenden's quaint orchard, and roughening the river's glassy surface into countless

little eddies. All these things became present to her as she looked. And beyond them—what? She gazed into the darkness in an ever-widening dream. There were roads leading outward into a great world—fields, sown for the food of busy millions, drinking the fallen rain— islands and vast continents—mountains with lonely summits—forests, and seas, with strange life in their hiding-places—cities with flaring lights, all lying behind the thin black curtain of the night. The darkness was full of that great life. Rachel saw her own existence as the merest atom, built into a mighty fabric, which could crush, but could not shelter.

What had Mr. Lauriston said? That if she could be secure she would stand apart from all mankind. There was no one of all those myriads, then, who was safe—no refuge in all the weary miles of earth and sea. She felt as if her fear had become the fear of all the world. And she had thought that he might help her, or Charley Eastwood!

It was long before she slept that night. She tossed restlessly from side to side, she recalled the events of the past day, she burned with uneasy shame at the thought of her silly confidences, she was angry with Mr. Lauriston for her own foolishness, she was angry with Charley for being exactly what he had been ever since she first knew him and liked him. She was tired out, and yet she could not sleep, and as the slow hours wore away she was frightened. The grey lady came back to her more vividly than she had done since those nights of childish agony. The stiff silk dress swept over the floor, the great eyes sought her own, the shadows of those other figures stood, as they stood on that terrible day, with their backs to her, unheeding. The darkness seemed to stifle her; and in the darkness lurked thoughts from which she turned in dismay, fearing lest a glance should stamp them for ever on her soul—thoughts of barred windows, and alien faces, and passionate frenzies of delusion, breaking like beaten waves against the immovable might of common sense. Her inconstant humour veered round again. Oh, for Charley, Charley Eastwood with his simple pleasure in living, and his healthy scorn of sick and baseless fancies! Oh, for Charley's pleasant smile, and one breath of the happy breezes blowing over Bucksmill Hill!

Sleep came at last; but not till the tired eyes had seen the light stealing drearily over the village roofs, while the wistaria which by day was all blossom and perfume and colour, and busy humming of the bees, hung in cold grey clusters against a desolate morning sky.

